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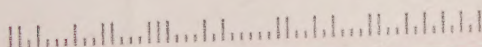
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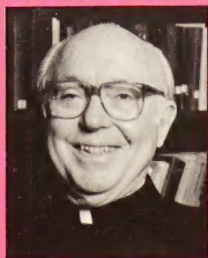
Priests, Power, and Sexual Abuse

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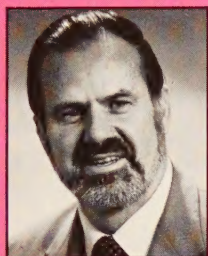




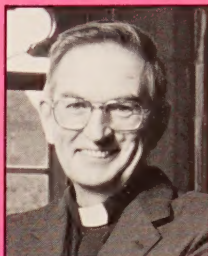
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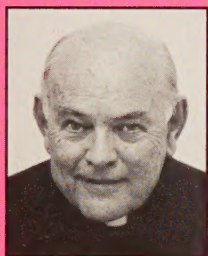
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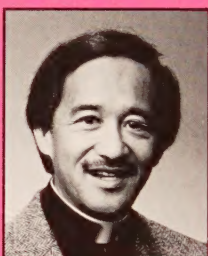
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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

CONTENTS

5

PRIESTS, POWER, AND SEXUAL ABUSE

James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.

10

A COMMUNITY'S TRIBAL DREAMS

Pat C. Brockman, O.S.U., Ph.D.

14

BENEFITS OF A LIFE REVIEWED

Paul N. Duckro, Ph.D., and Philip R. Magaletta, M.A.

18

HELP, HELP! ENEMIES!

James Torrens, S.J.

20

THE DEMANDS OF INCULTURATION

Joel Giallanza, C.S.C.

26

HAVE A SUCCESSFUL DEPRESSION

Robert Fitzgerald, S.J.

28

THE FANTASY ROAD TO SEXUAL INTEGRATION

Matthew Linn, S.J.

32

A VISIT TO ELDERHOSTEL

Reverend Frank E. Nieset, M.Div.

34

AN INNOVATIVE PROCESS FOR CHAPTERS

Jean Alvarez, Ed.D., and Nancy Conway, C.S.J., M.S.W.

39

TRANSFORMING A VIOLENT SOCIETY

Mercedes Pavlicevic, Ph.D.

43

MOVING A MOTHERHOUSE

Virginia Ann Gardner, S.S.J.

2

EDITORIAL BOARD

3

EDITOR'S PAGE

Resources for Better Living

47

BOOK REVIEWS

Pastoral Counseling with Adolescents and Young Adults

by Charles M. Shelton, S.J., Ph.D.

Witnessing to the Fire: Spiritual Direction and the Development of Directors
by Madeline Birmingham and William J. Connolly

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Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate to the Executive Editor, Linda Amadeo, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, St. John's Seminary, 127 Lake St., Brighton, MA 02135-3898. Copy should be typewritten double-spaced on $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ -inch white paper, 70 characters per line and 28 lines per page. Manuscripts are received with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not currently under consideration elsewhere. Feature articles should be limited to 4,500 words (15 pages) with no more than 6 recommended readings; filler items of between 500 and 1,000 words will be considered. All accepted material is subject to editing.

Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide author name(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Illustrations, if any, should be submitted as high-quality, glossy, unmounted black and white photographic prints. Do not send original artwork.

Letters are welcome and will be published as space permits and at the discretion of the editors. Such communications should not exceed 600 words and are subject to editing.

Book reviews, which should not exceed 600 words in length, should be sent to the Book Review Editor, Jon O'Brien, S.J., D.O., c/o HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (for address, see above).

Unaccepted manuscripts will not be returned unless requested and submitted with a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

Editorial Office: phone (617) 562-0766; fax (617) 562-0668.

EDITOR'S PAGE

RESOURCES FOR BETTER LIVING

A recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* sent my imagination soaring. It said that people all around the world are using the Internet computer network to tell others about their experiences with certain restaurants, hotels, airlines, plays, and the like, with the idea of warning people away from some of these enterprises and assuring them of the high quality of others. As a vehicle of global electronic communication, the rapidly developing Internet is not only capable of influencing one's choice of dining place, overnight lodging, or entertainment; it can also help make decisions about who gets hired or fired, what ventures are continued or discontinued, and what services to the public are given needed attention or left to deteriorate.

The *Journal* article reminded me of the booklets composed and sold annually by students at many American universities. These publications list the names of faculty members and the courses they teach, along with candid evaluations submitted by former students. The praise or condemnation thus conveyed often makes the difference between bulging or almost vacant classrooms during subsequent semesters. Other publications tell students about off-campus residences that have been found conducive to or incompatible with the successful pursuit of academic life. Such information services can be extremely helpful to new students, but their potential for damaging the future of certain professors and landlords is immense.

What the Internet and these assessment-bearing publications achieve is similar to the effect of word-of-mouth publicity, which can make or break the destiny of a Hollywood film or a Broadway play.

What people say about their experiences is generally more powerful than the most expensive advertising campaign. Impolite clerks can drive customers to shop elsewhere, just as obnoxious radio or television personalities can contribute to the heightening of their competitors' Nielsen ratings.

I can picture the day when the Internet will be used by parishioners to inform newcomers to a diocese about which parishes offer more lively liturgical celebrations on Sunday and to warn them which priests' homilies are excruciatingly long and hardly worth listening to. It's also easy to imagine that in the realm of business, much unfair harm could be inflicted on a competitor by means of the Internet. For example, a shipping line that offers summertime pleasure cruises could be torpedoed by a devastating lie such as, "Their ship's plumbing is frequently out of service, with resulting stateroom odors that are virtually unbearable." Such a comment could force a lot of people like myself to wait a long time before booking passage on that line.

Despite the damage that could be done through the Internet, however, I see it as a possibly useful device for making known our new Jesuit venture, the Christian Institute for the Study of Human Sexuality. Through the Internet, we could keep people around the world aware of the availability of rooms in our student residence during the various seasons of the year. We could identify the faculty members currently serving as tutors and seminar leaders. We could also publish comments made by our graduates to reassure Internet subscribers about the quality of the Institute's program. Such personal reports might be considerably more helpful to potential students than the information presented on the back cover of this magazine.

Right now, if we were using the Internet to inform our readers about the Institute, we would be

stating that we still have room for a small number of additional students in the groups starting in the fall and winter of this year. We now have fourteen faculty members, including four Jesuit psychiatrists, along with four professors from Harvard University and two from Boston College. Half of our teaching staff are women, and all of our faculty members possess M.D., Ph.D., or masters degrees.

A fact that we need to make widely known for the success of our Institute is that, although our program is designed especially to help persons doing spiritual direction and personal formation work in the context of diocesan seminaries or religious communities, we also welcome others who are engaged in pastoral ministry, church leadership, education, and all forms of service in which an in-depth knowledge about sexuality is useful. We hope to include among our future students many women and men who belong to other Christian denominations, not just Roman Catholics. A rich diversity among our

students is already being manifested by their coming to us from Scotland, Ireland, England, Italy, Canada, Mexico, Australia, the Philippines, and Tonga, as well as all parts of the United States.

Whether or not we eventually use the Internet to circulate information about our new venture, we are greatly encouraged by the exciting way the Institute has begun to operate. We are also grateful to the many readers of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT who have written to wish us good luck with this new enterprise. We hope all our readers will remember this ministry in their prayers—and also encourage potential students to consider spending a month or more with us here in the charming city of Boston.



James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.
Editor-in-Chief

Update on Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

A regular reader of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT has written to remind us that although we described chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) several years ago as a puzzling medical illness undergoing research, we never followed up with any recent information on the topic. "What is the current professional thinking about CFS?" she asks.

Dozens of hypotheses and treatments for CFS have been advanced during recent years, but the latest theory originated at Johns Hopkins University Medical School in Baltimore, Maryland. This hypothesis was developed by researchers who were impressed by the clinical observation of pediatric cardiologist Peter Rowe, M.D., that young patients who had unexplained fainting spells were medically similar to others who experienced chronic fatigue. "The children with recurrent fainting were also tired," reported Dr. Rowe, "but because their fainting was a more prominent symptom to everyone and much more distressing, the fatigue tended not to receive a great deal of attention. The children with CFS occasionally had fainting, but more commonly they would be able to abort an episode of fainting by sitting down. Their main symptom was light-headedness."

On the basis of these findings, the Johns Hopkins researchers developed a treatment program in which

patients increase their daily intake of salt and take a form of medication called a beta-blocker, which slows the heart rate. When 19 adult CFS patients followed this simple regimen, 15 improved, and nearly half experienced complete or nearly complete disappearance of their CFS symptoms.

The treatment is devised to keep the CFS patient's heart from pumping too vigorously. But it is still not clear to researchers what connection exists between the heart's dysfunction (insufficient blood volume in the left ventricle) and an infection, which many researchers believe is the initial cause of CFS in at least half of all cases.

A 1994 study in San Francisco, encompassing 17,000 people, concluded that nearly 200 people in every 100,000 report fatigue lasting more than six months. However, as many as two-thirds of these persons may have a condition other than CFS, according to Dr. William C. Reeves, who heads the CFS program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. He believes that the true prevalence of CFS is close to 70 per 100,000.

For more information, contact the National CFS and Fibromyalgia Association at (816) 931-5557.

Priests, Power, and Sexual Abuse

James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.

Knowledge has long been recognized as a source of power. Moreover, it has been conventionally identified as one of the best available resources for altering human behavior that involves an abuse of power. The pursuit of scientific knowledge about power is an enterprise initiated only during the past half century, but research is already producing information linking power closely with sex and violence. Harvard University psychologist David C. McClelland, for example, in *Power: The Inner Experience*, reported his finding that men with a high level of need for power are more likely than others to read *Playboy* and other "girlie" magazines and to watch television programs that convey images of violence. Other research, along with clinical experience, has repeatedly shown that power is an element intimately and consistently related to sexual abuse. It is that relationship which this article will explore, particularly regarding cases in which priests are the perpetrators and their victims are children.

CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

Sexual abuse of children involves an adult's intense and recurrent sexual urges and sexually arousing fantasies, which are expressed in sexual activity with a prepubescent child (generally, age 13 or younger)

or with an adolescent (age 14 through 17) at least five years younger than the adult. The perpetrator of such activity is usually called a *pedophile* when the victim is a child and an *ephebophile* when the victim is a pubescent child or adolescent.

The term *power* is used in conversation by millions of people every day, but most of the time its meaning is assumed to be clear enough that definition is unnecessary. Most of us would probably be willing to accept without question sociologist Max Weber's definition of power: "the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behavior of other persons." The distinguished economist John Kenneth Galbraith, in *The Anatomy of Power*, agrees with Weber when he describes the exercise of power simply as "someone or some group . . . imposing its will and purpose or purposes on others, including on those who are reluctant or adverse." It is Galbraith's understanding of the various types of power and their sources that I intend to use as a theoretical skeleton on which to flesh out my perception of the role of power in sexual abuse.

THREE INSTRUMENTS OF POWER

In his dissection of power's "anatomy," Galbraith identifies three instruments for wielding or enforcing

power. He designates them as "condign power," "compensatory power," and "conditioned power."

Condign power obtains the submission of others to one's purpose(s) by inflicting or threatening some sort of adverse consequence(s) should the other refuse to comply. An example would be a priest threatening to humiliate a child in public if the child does not participate in the sexual behavior the man has in mind. Or he might threaten to prevent the boy or girl from playing on a school team, which the child ardently desires to do. As Galbraith writes, "Condign power threatens the individual with something physically or emotionally painful enough so that he forgoes pursuit of his own will or preference in order to avoid it." In brief, this instrument of power wins submission by promising or administering punishment.

Compensatory power is demonstrated by offering an individual a financial payment or some other sort of reward so that he or she forgoes pursuit of his or her own preference in order to obtain what is promised instead. For example, a priest desiring sexual compliance from a child may offer to take the boy or girl on a trip or provide a longed-for item of clothing as payment for an affirmative response. Giving something of value to the child is essential, and even praise or signs of admiration may serve as the reward. If the child being abused is young enough or naive enough, the priest may succeed in obtaining compliance by promising that God will reward the "person who is good to a priest" with the gift of eternal happiness. (Alternatively, in the same circumstances, the priest may use condign power to threaten the child with interminable suffering in hell as payment for noncooperation in the proposed sexual deed.)

Conditioned power is exercised by changing someone's belief(s). Through persuasion, education, or exposure to prevailing social beliefs about what is natural, proper, or right, the person becomes disposed to submit to the will of another or others. In this case, the submission reflects the person's own preference, and he or she does not even recognize that submission is occurring. For example, a priest may persuasively teach the child that sexual actions are acts of love and that God will be pleased if the child shows love for the priest through such actions. Or the priest may capitalize on the fact that in the child's social milieu, there is a commonly held conviction that anything a priest wants should be done for him or given to him as a sign of gratitude for all he is doing for his parishioners. As these examples

illustrate, this third instrument of power involves the child's conviction (resulting from becoming conditioned to behavior) that responding to a priest in a cooperative way—even sexually—is right and good, just as being obedient to parents is right and good.

Conditioning is considered *explicit* when the child's belief (preference) is deliberately cultivated by the priest. On the other hand, a preference can be dictated by the culture (represented by the family) surrounding the child; in this case the conditioning is termed *implicit*. An example of the latter would be the conditioned belief that priests—since they are good and holy men—deserve to be shown respectful subservience at all times, and their integrity is never to be questioned, even if they say that the sexual behavior they are proposing is "just for the sex education" of the child.

Conditioning of children in the home, in Catholic schools, and at church on Sunday can heighten their vulnerability to sexual abuse if authority figures (e.g., priests, coaches, police, clergy) are designated as always deserving complete respect and unquestioning compliance with their wishes. It is the cultivation of such misleading beliefs, either explicitly or implicitly, that allows the priest to have power and control over a child and his or her behavior. Galbraith lucidly summarizes the way implicit conditioning is accomplished:

All societies have a yet more comprehensive form of social conditioning. It is sufficiently subtle and pervasive that it is deemed a natural and integral part of life itself; there is no visible or specific effort that wins the requisite belief and submission. Thus parental authority need not in most cases be asserted; it is seemingly normal and what all children by nature accept. And similarly the authority of the schoolteacher and priest. . . . Such implicit conditioning bears comprehensively and invisibly upon the individual from birth.

Once belief is won, whether by explicit or implicit conditioning, the resulting subordination to the will of others is thought to be the product of the individual's own moral or social sense—his or her feeling as to what is right or good.

THREE SOURCES OF POWER

After examining those three forms (instruments) of power, the question naturally arises: What permits or enables individuals to exercise them? Galbraith suggests that there are three sources of power: personality, property, and organization.

Personality, in the individual with power, may include such qualities as charm, kindness, interest,

intelligence, humor, solemnity, seeming honesty, and the ability to express thoughts in a cogent, eloquent, repetitive, or otherwise compelling manner. All of these can be helpful in winning belief on the part of the child (i.e., conditioning the child) and thus setting the stage for successful sexual seduction. In other words, personality is generally found closely associated with conditioned power. However, the appearance and physical strength or size of the individual may also enable him or her to exercise threatening (condign) power. Through their well-developed personalities, priests can often exercise both the conditioned and condign forms of power—especially in relation to small children.

Property, or money, gives to a person the possibility of purchasing submission through the use of compensatory power. But at times, if the individual is considered wealthy, others may become submissive in a conditioned way, since they perceive in him or her an aspect of authority and a certainty of purpose that seem to merit deference and compliance. If a priest has enough money (and many priests do) to buy gifts or to pay for excursions that children enjoy, experience shows that it is all too easy to purchase sexual compliance, especially from children who are poor or deprived of affection or pleasure within the context of a dysfunctional family life.

Organization is generally established because an exercise of power is needed. Military structures and labor unions, along with the church, give obvious evidence of this truth. Once an organization is functioning, it is capable of conditioning people to respond through persuasion. Enemies surrender on the battlefield and business owners capitulate to strikes when conditioning power is brought to bear in a convincing way. An organization may also have access to condign power, giving it the ability to administer diverse forms of punishment. The church, for example, has the power to excommunicate (and, in the past, had the power to burn a heretic at the stake) and can use the threat of such punishments as leverage to exact compliance with its purposes. Additionally, the church—like other organizations, such as Boeing Aircraft or the International Monetary Fund—has at times been able to gain cooperation with its aims by using compensatory power based on it property and perceived wealth.

In one of the most interesting paragraphs in his book, Galbraith cites the Catholic church as providing one of the most obvious examples of the three sources of power and the three related instruments for exercising it:

In earliest Christian days, power originated with the compelling personality of the Savior. Almost immediately an organization, the Apostles, came into being, and in time the Church as an organization became the most influential and durable in all the world. Not the least of its sources of power was its property and the income thus disposed. From the combination of personality (those of the Heavenly Presence and a long line of religious leaders), the property, and, above all, the unique organization came the conditioned belief, the benefices or compensation, and the threat of condign punishment either in this world or the next that, in the aggregate, constituted the religious power. Such is the complex of factors in and, in great measure concealed by, that term [*power*].

All of this power of the church is often recognized as being vested in priests. Children especially are unlikely to view these leaders as distinct in any way from the organization they officially represent. Consequently, as a result of their identification with a sacred and powerful corporate body, priests have access to power that is at times compensatory and at other times condign or conditioned. In other words, they can get what they want in many life situations simply because they are “men of the cloth,” which to their constituents implies special entitlement. Children, seeing that exceptional deference is displayed by adults toward these men, naturally find it difficult to say no to a priest who strongly requests or demands their sexual compliance. It is usually the persuasive power of the priest, along with his highly respected role, that draws the child to submit himself or herself, even when the behavior is objectively abusive.

POWERLESSNESS ELICITS ABUSE

In *Understanding Race, Ethnicity, and Power*, Elaine Pinderhughes describes how individuals who feel powerless frequently act “in ways that will neutralize their pain with strategies that enable them to turn that powerlessness into a sense of power.” Manipulation is one such strategy. Priests who seduce children into complying with their sexual desires—and the same is true in relation to adult women—are often giving evidence of their own feeling of powerlessness in the face of what they perceive to be overwhelming power exercised by the pope, by bishops, and sometimes by pastors and even parishioners. In such cases, the abused victim is simply being exploited in an unconscious effort by the clergyman to attain a “sense of power”—which, Pinderhughes reminds us, is critical to the maintenance of “one’s mental health.”

On the other hand, she notes, at times the priest himself may be manipulated into sexual misbehavior

Ministers who actively maintain their own physical, spiritual, emotional, and psychological health are less likely to violate boundaries through sexual behavior

by adolescents or adults who behave in sexually provocative ways in order to defend themselves against a pervasive sense of their own powerlessness. To be able to resist these temptations, priests must be "comfortable with themselves and with their own power needs," Pinderhughes writes. "High self-esteem, which we have learned is in part dependent on a clear and positive sense of cultural identity, is needed along with a strong sense of self-differentiation. . . . Only such attributes and capacities will enable [priests] to control the feelings mobilized by the power tactics these clients will use, and to behave appropriately with them," she concludes.

ABUSE APPRAISED THEOLOGICALLY

Deserving of every seminarian's and clergyperson's study today is James Newton Poling's *The Abuse of Power: A Theological Problem*, in which the author focuses penetratingly on power and its abuse as manifested in sexual violence toward women and children. He stresses that all sexual contacts between adults and children are destructive because of the power inequities between those involved. Women, too, are open to being abused sexually because they are vulnerable to "boundary violations" in pastor-parishioner relationships. Such vulnerability parallels that which is common in other professional relationships involving power imbalances—for example, employer-employee, doctor-patient, and counselor-client. Whenever we find power disadvantages, whether experienced by women or children, we will always discover vulnerability to exploitation, sexual or otherwise.

For those who wish to explore inequalities of parental and social power as occasions for the abuse of power through sexual abuse, Poling's chapter on "Power and Abuse of Power" is must reading. Regarding children, he writes:

Some children are physically overpowered and raped by men who have no concern for their well-being. Some are sexually exploited and then intimidated into silence by being made to fear for their safety or the safety of their family. Some children are manipulated over long periods of time into gratifying the needs of a molester, usually a trusted family member. The use of threats and rewards to exploit a child's vulnerability is abuse of power.

In the same chapter, Poling describes how "power that is intended by God for everyone who lives is used to destroy relationships in exchange for control. Rather than live in insecurity, some persons choose to create structures that dominate and control others for personal gratification and false security." He points out that in addition to the dysfunctional family, which provides a structure that lends itself to domination and control, "the unjust power relationships of men and women perpetuated by ideologies and institutions" create the conditions for abuse of power. It is within such unhealthy structures that incest and other forms of sexual exploitation of women and children are likely to occur.

WORKSHOP PROVIDES REMEDY

The foregoing discussion of the abuse of power in instances of sexual abuse, particularly on the part of priests, naturally leads to the question, What can be done to reduce the incidence of sexual abuse by clergy and other ministers? A good answer is provided by the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, which is situated in Seattle, Washington. In a published trainer's manual for their workshop on "Clergy Misconduct: Sexual Abuse in the Ministerial Relationship," the authors view prevention of sexual abuse as a matter of preserving ministerial boundaries. They present their prevention plan in terms of promoting "individual health," which includes both personal and professional health. Their fundamental assumption is that "ministers who actively maintain their own physical, spiritual, emotional and psychological health are less likely to violate boundaries through sexual misbehavior."

When the Center's writers use the term *institutional health*, they are speaking of the characteristics of religious institutions that sustain healthy and effective ministries. They observe that "healthy institutions have an organizational 'climate' in which

sexual contact or sexualized behavior toward congregants/staff is unacceptable.” Concretely, the church communicates to clergy and employees, through its policies and procedures, that “such behavior will not be tolerated and will be punished. Built into their structures and routine practices are mechanisms that reduce the opportunities for sexual abuse in ministerial relationships and allow detection of this behavior when it does occur.”

The workshop manual writers are realistic. They acknowledge that prevention cannot heal the wounds resulting from abuse. Neither can it stop sexual predators, who are not likely to change their behavior voluntarily. But prevention can decrease the chance that ministers will “wander” across boundaries, and thus can reduce the sum of sexual abuse within the ministry. The writers recognize that the key to solving the problem is education that (1) teaches ministers to maintain boundaries and to repudiate any justification for “wandering,” (2) protects against victimization, and (3) creates an institutional climate in which sexual abuse is not tolerated.

The workshop provides a “Self-Assessment Checklist” designed to help participants become aware of crucial factors that influence their behavior with regard to boundaries. It explains:

[The] risk of doing harm to those whom we serve or supervise can be considerably reduced through self-knowledge and self-care. If we understand our personal history and its effects of us, our behavior and perceptions are less likely to be shaped by that history. If we are aware of our personal needs and are taking care of those needs in appropriate ways, we are less likely to impose those needs inappropriately upon our ministerial relationships. And if we are aware of the power implicit in our role and how that power affects those whom we service and supervise, we are less likely to misuse that power.

Questions such as the following are included in the workshop and are designed to help participants recognize their needs, particularly in relation to power:

- Do I acknowledge the power inherent in my professional role?
- Am I aware of the effects of that power on those with whom I interact—for example, the attraction that power holds for some people?
- Do I remain alert to my potential for violating boundaries due to that power?
- Am I aware of the consequences to me of my violating the boundaries of my ministerial relationships?

As helpful as the workshop is to its clergy participants, its primary importance may be that it serves as a reminder that the misuse of one’s sexuality in ministry and the connection between abuse of power and sexual misbehavior are topics for repeated and profound discussion in seminaries, where future priests are being educated and trained. Formation personnel and spiritual directors in that setting are positioned strategically to raise the issues of sexuality and power in conversation with every candidate for the priesthood. Bishops and religious superiors should make sure that these guiding men and women are adequately educated about sexuality and trained in the skills that will make profound and personalized discussion of these topics possible in every seminary and house of religious formation.

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A Community's Tribal Dreams

Pat C. Brockman, O.S.U., Ph.D.

Ever since the great visions of Black Elk were made known, many of us "civilized" people have grasped at the hope that tribal dreams may belong to us also, directing our community destiny and sense of purpose. We earnestly study the ways of primitive peoples, attempt to imitate their customs, and often pursue their visions of the face of God. We even accept with little difficulty the Native American belief that dreams provide revelations about the tribe's life and its relationship with God. Just as easily, however, we ignore or deny our own "tribal" dreams.

Like Native Americans, Christians have a long faith tradition regarding messages to God's people. This church tradition, which arose from scripture, continued through much of the first millennium; Christians accepted God's word in dreams without embarrassment. As Carl Jung wrote, "only in modern times has the dream met with such profound contempt." Decades after the start of the church's renewal and our reeducation in scripture, we still ignore the rich biblical tradition of discovering God's word as made known through dreams. Yet our personal and communal conversions are rooted in Christian symbols, transforming our lives at key moments. We have known image and symbol to be effective agents of change throughout Judeo-Christian

history. In a world of increasing global consciousness, we cannot afford to ignore the power and influence of dreams in the collective life.

EXTENDING SYMBOLS AND IMAGES

On the basis of this human and Christian experience, I proposed to New Jerusalem, the lay worshiping community of which I am a member, that we attempt as a group to gather and explore our dreams—the "tribal" dreams of our intentional Christian community. In his writings, Joseph Campbell has assured us that the saints are those who become holy within their own tradition. Thus, although I may join others in using smudge sticks, I value and feel even more comfortable with the burning of incense, which in our story symbolizes our prayers rising to God. If we have been shown the way to dream exploration by our more "primitive" brothers and sisters, however, why not trust the same God who is Father and Mother for every group to address us through the symbolic language common to all human beings?

Being a Catholic community in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Ohio, New Jerusalem is structured around, but not limited to, Eucharist and sacrament. We have felt the affective power of other images and rituals; moreover, we have seen how quickly Roga-

tion Day processions, harvest blessings, local novenas, and national devotions have been lost. All of these had risen from the needs and desires of a people: effective celebrations of renewal, intercession, and communion, symbolized by dance, gesture, images of nature, and festive foods.

Together, the members of New Jerusalem have sought to extend those communal symbols of sacrament and ritual to include dreams. By so doing, we have hoped to expand and update the store of symbols available to intentional Christian communities, such as lay and religious communities, parishes, and other groups. Raising awareness of the power of the unconscious in religious experience invites not only individual persons but also families, communities, and even nations to rediscover the dream messages in their lives.

COMMUNAL CONTENT OF DREAMS

Is there a basis for the claim that dreams have communal content and may even reflect the word of God to a community? I have found support for this claim not only in accounts of the experience of Native Americans and in evidence of the effectiveness of dreams and symbols in past and present Christian communities, but also in the theories of Carl Jung regarding the collective psyche and in the dream experiments of Henry Reed.

Research into Carl Jung's understanding of the nature of the collective psyche provided me with a psychological basis for approaching the "communal soul" of a group. For a year I collected accounts of the dreams of members of the New Jerusalem community. The major themes included several typical of lay life: marriage, children, and the priesthood of the people. More global and archetypal themes also emerged: masculine and feminine tensions, desire for communion, and searching for direction.

Jung—writing, of course, as a religious psychologist rather than a theologian—parallels the nature of the human psyche with that of the collective psyche. In describing how each functions, he shows that the individual and group psyches are interdependent. The individual psyche is carried in the collective psyche and arises out of it; the collective psyche, conversely, is shaped and transformed by the individuals who make it up. Both move through definable stages of transformation and growth.

Henry Reed of the Association for Research and Enlightenment in Virginia Beach, Virginia, put these ideas to the test by creating a theoretical community of dreamers who were unknown to one another. Having already worked extensively with individuals dreaming for one another, Reed invited the dreamers

in his Sundance experiment to dream for the world and for the nation. For five years the accounts of dreams by members of this "intentional community" of scattered dreamers revealed markedly similar themes and images regarding the situations and events to which they had addressed themselves. A contemporary sense of the communal dream had begun to take shape.

As a symbolic event, a dream has power to trigger new levels of awareness in us. Yet unlike many familiar symbols, the dream—a moving picture, a tumble of vibrant images—still awaits our acknowledgment of its power for reawakening and conversion. In my experience with various Christian groups, community dreams provide a rich store of each community's unique symbols; these go beyond those of the sacraments and rituals with which we are so familiar and from which we draw so much life.

A COMMUNITY DREAMS TOGETHER

The community of New Jerusalem began dreaming together with a predictable amount of wonder and skepticism. In the period following the loss of our founder, Richard Rohr, O.F.M., our dreams heralded a sharp sense of what it meant to trust ourselves as the church and to understand better Peter's reference to the priesthood of the people. The following dream account is one of several hundred collected over a year from present and past members:

We are in a lovely home, actually it is a castle . . . extraordinarily beautiful . . . also a school. My classroom is the central hallway of the castle: it has the disadvantage of being in a hallway instead of a room, but the advantage of being right in the heart of the building.

Some visitors . . . very important people . . . are there to observe my classroom, and I understand that they are from the *real* castle. There seems to be some difficulty about where they would all sit in order to see this production we are rehearsing. The difficulty is that it is just a hallway, and those there only to watch have no good vantage point. . . . They are able to see what's going on OK, but only a part at a time. This is a good working space, but not a good watching space.

The seating arrangement is figured out to a point where everybody is somewhat pleased, and rehearsal begins. The leading central actor is in the center of the center hallway. It is very significant that this precise spot is not only the heart of the hallway, but the heart of the castle as well. The whole cast is involved in developing some kind of code . . . so that all the people in the castle will know precisely how and when to come to the central actor. We have to stop frequently and work things out step by step. It is slow work. We are developing a method of how to call people to the center

Collecting accounts of communal dreams and examining their archetypal meanings and subjective implications heightens insights into community life

of the hallway, the center of the castle, where the actor stands. It is engrossing; now and then I wonder how the observers are . . . just watching must be tedious, but being involved is quite the contrary.

As a lay community, we are finding that it is far more exciting to be both engaged and primarily responsible, at the center of the church, than to be observers. Without immediate ordained leadership, we are more aware of that call to the center. And we are sensitive to the fact that the next stage of this community experiment is being watched by many important church figures, both hopeful and skeptical. We are in school, learning, rehearsing for our parts in the real venture—a slow process. There is a central Christ figure, and we are learning how to take a more central role. One is reminded of Teresa of Avila's interior castle, a wonderfully archetypal setting for the spiritual journey to the central room of the king. In our case, the transitional state of the community and of the church in general is best symbolized by a hallway, an image I found common in the dreams of the New Jerusalem community. My purpose here is not so much to analyze our dreams as to give a brief example of their descriptive nature. The feelings of each dreamer were confirmed by other community members as they reflected on that person's dream: our community life is beautiful, engrossing, centered on Christ. Yet we are conscious that we are being watched to see if we can "make it" as a lay community, especially without our ordained leader. We are also aware of having to work things out step by step, to decode the processes.

In a year given to exploring God's word directed to us as a community, we gathered our dreams monthly.

We held them in reverent—and often playful—consideration, and asked God to speak again, as in early times, to us as a people. We desired to see if dreams would reveal God's message to us, as they had for our scriptural ancestors and the early church. Explored together, our dreams revealed patterns that described our life together or hinted at how we might take action as a community. We applied theological reflection to the texts of our dreams to explore the meanings of their symbols. Each member of the community was asked for input, and many chose to participate.

THEMES OF COMMUNITY DREAMS

In the membership's year-long quest for God's Word in dreams, twenty-eight themes arose. In some cases, several persons would have almost identical dreams on the same night. A case in point: One night, three members of the community dreamed of a child standing on the edge of a steep precipice, with a watchful parent close by. Subsequently, two other members had similar dreams involving a dangerous, steep slope with muddy water at its foot. The theme of danger was evident in these dreams. In each one, the parent showed the child how to avoid the danger. A later dream would indicate that the muddy water had cleared up. In the meantime, we addressed a prayer to God, using the image of the dream: "Lord, we are standing on the edge of a precipice. Show us what the danger is and how to avoid it." Subsequent dreams told us that we are in danger of losing our confidence as lay leaders in the church, and we are losing our conscious awareness that this is happening.

In the dreams our community examined over the course of a year, eight to ten major themes were very strong. They included new birth; leadership; ourselves (laypersons) as the church; our masculine and feminine energies; and communion. Children, or childhood, was another persistent theme that year, as it had been during New Jerusalem's founding years. The latter theme pointed to three dimensions of our life: our fragile awareness of ourselves as the church; our faith responsibility for community children; and finally, our call to the poor, those vulnerable persons who teach us of our own poverty.

REDISCOVERY OF DREAMS BENEFICIAL

What, then, did we learn from our observations about community members' dreams? We learned that collective dreamwork parallels the process of individual dreamwork. We learned that the collected dreams of a group give rise to communal themes that describe areas of dilemma, growth, or feeling, or

suggest change or action. The process of collecting accounts of communal dreams and examining their archetypal meanings and subjective implications for the group heightened our insights into our community life. We discovered previously unknown information about our communal story, as well as fresh images with which to express it.

We learned that not only "big" dreams but also ordinary dreams have many levels of meaning, one of which applies to community. We learned that a dream may refer to past communal failings, suggesting a need for healing or insight; it may describe the present situation or prefigure a future event.

On the basis of what we have learned, two traditional religious communities have applied, and have benefited from, our process of collecting and analyzing their communal dreams. Another religious community is considering the possibility of incorporating the exploration of community dreaming into its next congregational chapter.

For the members of New Jerusalem, perhaps the greatest blessing to arise from our attention to community dreams has been an increased faith in God's presence among us. The scriptural experience of God addressing his people through dreams has become a more acceptable and understandable reality to us. As contemporary Christians, we have discovered how

to expand our traditional and precious categories of symbols by rediscovering the dream.

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Benefits of a Life Reviewed

*Paul N. Duckro, Ph.D.,
and Philip R. Magaletta, M.A.*

Both folklore and clinical literature attest that the elderly have a natural propensity to tell stories of their past. This fact should not be overlooked, especially in light of the ever-increasing numbers of aging clergy and religious and the limited funds for therapeutic activities. When harnessed and directed, this naturally occurring process of storytelling can be a useful and cost-effective therapeutic tool. A formal intervention called life review, which uses the stories of an individual's life, has been developed and constructively used over the past twenty-five years.

The first published description of life review as a therapeutic process appeared in a seminal article written in the early 1960s by Robert Butler. His idea was based on the developmental theory of Erik Erikson. The premise was that life review provided a vehicle with which to address the developmental task of psychological integration, which includes reconciliation of the "good" and "bad" events of one's life.

Butler originally used the terms *life review* and *reminiscence* interchangeably. Over time, these terms have been differentiated. In this article, we will use the term *reminiscence therapy* to refer to any therapy that uses recollection of personal history, including life review, for healing. All reminiscence therapies have the goal of enhancing general well-being and include the review of positive aspects of the life story.

Life review holds the specific goal of achieving psychological integration (ego integrity) and necessarily includes a review of both positive and negative life events. There is a structure to the process of life review, whereas some of the other reminiscence therapies have a more casual or spontaneous character.

While one hallmark of the life review is its flexibility in application, several basic elements always characterize its content and the process.

LIFE REVIEW CONTENT

How and where content is recalled. The overall intent of the review is to engage the memory of the reviewer. The process of remembering may be enhanced in many ways. Awareness of themes from many years ago is still present in the elderly, even though recall of specific facts may fade away. One salient memory seems to be connected to another and yet another. This strength in the association of memories can be used to an advantage in the life review. Situations causing emotional distress in the present are often rich in associations with past events that evoked similar feelings. Encouraging the reviewer to freely report the next thought or image that comes to mind is as effective with the elderly as it is with anyone else. Pictures, music, or

souvenirs of earlier times may also be productive stimuli for memories.

The setting in which life review is conducted can be flexibly modified to suit the needs of the reviewers. The process may be engaged in by a group, a dyad, or an individual. Oral forms of life review involving social interaction are most common, but the process may also be carried out through journal or diary keeping. The most intense and individualized life review is achieved in a dyad consisting of a guide and a reviewer engaging in verbal interactions analogous to those that occur in psychotherapy or spiritual direction. The trusting relationship formed between guide and reviewer is an added and interactive benefit of this process.

With sufficient time and skillful facilitation, a group approach to life review may have unique benefits of its own. The potential for social support and modeling is greater in a group than in a dyad. Relationships formed among group members may carry over to other aspects of their lives. This may be especially important for elderly persons living in a new or centralized location, away from those whom they had previously lived with and served. A life-review group may offer such individuals an opportunity to form a new community, allowing for continued growth rather than simply enduring decline.

What content is recalled. In the end, each person's life review is a reflection on a set of unique experiences. Nevertheless, certain categories of life experience typically emerge in the review. The broadest and most relevant of these categories is strained relationships. These relationships may be subclassified according to the stage of life in which they occurred, their setting (e.g., familial, occupational, or congregational), and the extent to which they have lingered or been resolved.

Another common category is that of ministry, encompassing perceived successes and failures. In the life reviews of many clergy and religious, the recollection of receiving and responding to "the call" is prominent. An individual may derive great affirmation from an appreciation of the lifelong commitment that has sprung from his or her response. At the same time, that person often feels the need to take responsibility for perceived failures in order to fully actualize his or her vocation and to experience forgiveness.

Other authors suggest that avocational activities be included in the life review. Depending on the review's timing, this category of experience can be useful in highlighting an individual's natural talents and predilections, which may thus far not have been given full expression. The pattern of avocational

activity may suggest possible new forms of ministry or recreation for that person as he or she separates from previous work.

Although facts about relationships or work events may emerge quite readily during the life review, it is important for the guide to observe the reviewer's emotional tone and to encourage his or her recall of feelings associated with past events and aroused by their memory. Affective memories also may be elicited directly. For example, the guide might ask the reviewer to recall times when he or she felt happy, competent, loving, guilty, ashamed, or helpless. Categories of emotion may be selected because they are generally revealing, or the guide may ask the reviewer to address an emotion that is evident in the present.

PROCESS OF TURNING

The process of life review is one of turning. One turns back to recollect the past and turns again to bring it to the present, from which the future is formed. The life review has many parallels with spiritual exercises that clergy and religious have experienced. One can make connections with the sacrament of reconciliation, the examen of conscience or consciousness, and the fourth and tenth steps of twelve-step recovery programs. Similar in some ways to the Buddhist concept of mindfulness, the integration fostered by the life review enhances acceptance of the present and appreciation of its richness. Life review is not "living in the past." The presence of a guide who listens and reflects, and the structure of the review process, discourage a dismal type of reminiscence.

Of course, some reviewers, despite good intentions and competent guidance, do get bogged down in sadness, shame, or resentment as they recall their past. Although the structure of life review is designed to encourage integration rather than compartmentalization, the guide may need to apply certain techniques in order to help the reviewer who does not seem to be moving toward integration. Some authors have suggested that positive and negative points of the review be noted in an accounting ledger in order to demonstrate that there is a positive "balance" in the "account" of the reviewer's experiences. Another technique is to develop a map of the individual's life path, recording the directions it has taken and the intersecting paths of important others. The image of the path clarifies the many ways in which God has worked in all the events of that person's life, whether seen as positive or negative, to accomplish ends that the individual may not have been aware of until now.

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among the old;
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full of possibility**

Typically, the structure of the life review is based on the life stages. However, it is not imperative that the stages be reviewed sequentially. The reviewer is invited to discuss any past events that come to mind during the process of remembering. The meanings of these events—taken not in themselves but in relation to other occurrences—are critical. A story is being woven as the reviewer recounts his or her experiences. In telling this story, the individual must be encouraged to describe events as simply and directly as possible. Assumptions about past motivations must be examined, and alternatives considered. Memories must be reframed to include not only the individual's perspective but that of the guide and/or the group as a whole. As each scene or act is described and discussed, connections will become clear, and the story will gradually be understood.

The guide listens for clues to the meanings of events, often present in the emotions expressed by the reviewer as he or she relates memories. New themes are found among the old; surprising aspects of the familiar are revealed. Through it all, the guide responds to the reviewer with warmth, respect, and caring. This is the process by which the individual's history is transformed. A past that may have seemed lifeless or meaningless is transformed into a living history full of possibility. This transformation is no twisting of the truth; it occurs naturally and honestly as the negatives and positives of the person's life are seen as part of a larger whole. Not only are negatives balanced by positives; the very meaning of a

negative" event is changed by the realization that it was in some way the source of new growth. A revised vision of the past leads to a new vision of the present, and the reviewer gains an appreciation of his or her wholeness, even in the face of the decline of physical function and the loss of companions. Gratitude comes naturally with understanding.

A touching example of this process was seen in the life review of an elderly religious who had been placed in many assignments throughout his life. He felt shame before his community for not having made a long career in any one place. He saw his life as a string of failures and experienced himself as inadequate to his vocation. Such thoughts contributed mightily to his depression and isolation. His regrets and embarrassment blocked the path to integrity. As he discussed all the places he had been, there came to his mind unexpectedly the image of a rosary on which each bead represented one of his assignments. In turn, he perceived that each assignment represented powerful mysteries of God's working through weakness. With this image, he could pray the rosary his life had been, in joy and sorrow, and to the glory of God. He began to consider again what might be the next ministry of his life, in the spirit of the pilgrim who has no place of his own but is at home everywhere.

RESULTS OF LIFE REVIEW

As with any therapeutic technique, there is much art in the use of life review. For that reason, it is hard to study it scientifically. In spite of the many obstacles to scientific investigation of the life review, some researchers have continued in their efforts to measure its effects in clinical settings, and some have even attempted to capture the clinical reality in controlled experiments. Thus far, most research on the subject indicates that there are at least five commonly reported positive effects of competent, thorough, and caring applications of life review.

Positive psychological state. Many studies culled from the nursing, educational, psychological, gerontological, medical, and social work literatures attest to the salutary effect of life review on psychological outcomes. Reviewers exhibit decreased depression and increased life satisfaction, self-esteem, and psychological well-being.

Increased social support. The life review, whether conducted individually or in a group, can improve social interaction with others. In the content of a life review there may be great loss, but in the telling of the story there is human contact. Hence, whereas

the reviewer may previously have felt only loss, he or she may now experience a renewal of spirit in new relationships. The guide, often younger than the reviewer, can relate to him or her as an honored grandmother or grandfather, wise by virtue of experience and valued in the telling of it. In a group format, previously unrecognized commonalities are found among the group members, and new connections are forged.

Enhanced sense of community. The benefits of the life review extend beyond the benefit to the elderly reviewer. There is a positive effect on the community through those members who listen and guide. There is an enlivening of the whole when the community honors the old in thought and deed. By participating in their memories, particularly when those memories include what amounts to an oral history of the congregation, the community nourishes not only the individual but its own roots as well. The members of the community have a greater sense of their congregation's history and a new confidence that their roots will continue to give life in some form, no matter how discouraging the external situation may appear. The wisdom imparted by aging religious, even as they recount their failures and unresolved conflicts, is often realized only in retrospect, coming as an unearned grace and gift.

Support in loss. In its unflinching honesty, the life review nourishes the courage needed to face sickness and death in self and others. Contemplation of the reality of death brings with it a deeper experience of life and a fuller understanding of the many ways in which the individual extends beyond the boundaries of current existence. Many teachers in myriad faith traditions have instructed their followers in the contemplation of death as a means of enhancing appreciation of the here and now.

Instillation of hope. Finally, through the process of life review, elderly clergy and religious can learn to

accept themselves as they are and as they have been. They identify natural strengths and effective methods of coping that they can still use. The beauty of the mosaic formed by the events of a life now almost completed, its pattern and meaning more fully revealed, can be appreciated despite that life's imperfections. The ability of God to work for good in and through these imperfections becomes the hope for today and for tomorrow.

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Help, Help! Enemies!

James Torrens, S.J.

Sunday in Tacna

Ojo Negro, Coco, Jasmine
the Catholic dogs trot in
pew to pew nosing
up front reposing

carros, camiónes, buses
horns, backfire, grind of trucks
the church door lets in
latecomer, come in

zamponya, charango, bombón
guitar, pipes, drum
be the sound shrill
the response thrills

mozos, criadas, jornaleros
housemaids, busboys, diggers
sit still for the word
chew what they've heard

dueña, finquero, financiero
taskmaster, mistress, loan shark
love them all, please
yes, even these

During some travels this past winter, I left my breviary behind in favor of a more compact book of psalms. The *Divine Office* picks and chooses from the psalms daily; its arrangement, if sensitive, is selective. Reading straight through the psalms for a change, it struck me as never before that the whole of the psalter—but especially the first half—is obsessed by the hostile environment facing the Just One and the chosen people. Over and over, the psalms allude to personal hostility and the scheming and violence of “the wicked.” The terms *enemy* or *the wicked* appear, I would bet, in three-quarters of the psalms up to the midpoint of the collection.

What vivid imagery the psalmist exercised upon this theme: “My enemy has hunted me down . . . and put me in a dark prison” (143). “My enemies have hidden a trap for me” (143; also 10, 38, 119). “I have so many enemies . . . thousands surround me on every side” (3). “They are like lions, waiting to tear me to pieces” (17). They are “like bulls,” “like dogs” (22). They are whispering, making plans (31); they smirk and gloat (35, 44). The wicked (see the eloquent description of them in Psalm 73, 1–12) are everywhere, aiming their arrows (11, 37).

Plenty of subtext—much of it actual history—is latent in these psalms. Jews praying them today will no doubt have sharply present in their minds the fact of

vicious, diabolical anti-Jewish hostility, beginning with the pharaohs and reaching a peak with the Holocaust. A long, bitter hyperawareness seems part of this legacy. And undeniably, the psalms look for a turning of the tables, a forceful vindication, as in this chilling finale to Psalm 137 (omitted in the *Divine Office*): "Babylon, happy is the man who pays you back for what you have done to us—who takes your babies and smashes them against a rock."

Can these psalms be said to feed paranoia? No doubt. But paranoia is just a step beyond accurate perception of real threats. This keen sense of enemies and concentration on the wicked is foreign to me, I must confess. That may be due partly to naïveté and partly to benign conditions of work and community living. (More germane to me is Steve Kelly's quip from *Pogo*: "We have met the enemy and they are us.") Nonetheless, these prayers keep speaking eloquently to those who, in their workplaces, are bedeviled by negativity or scheming or hurtful conditions, or at home are woefully mistreated. They have provided a vent for the angry and desperate in the prison camps and "national security" systems of our century. In his series of *Salmos*, the Nicaraguan poet Ernesto Cardenal gave voice to the piercing cry of those weighed down by dictatorship.

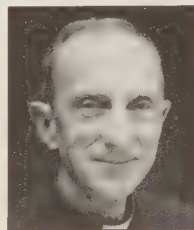
Urgency is the dominant note in those psalms in which enemies or the wicked figure largely. The person at prayer keeps calling out, "Come to my aid." The voice of these cries begs to be freed from fears, to be shielded and sheltered. As a response to so much that one fears, these prayers that are also songs aim to elicit trust. The psalms of limpid trustfulness—for example, 16 and 62—are few, but they are among the most highly treasured. "I look to the mountains; where will my help come from? / my help will come from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (120). The psalms of embattled trustfulness (e.g., 91) are more common, invoking God's protection in the midst of plagues and terrors. The tempter even tries to use this psalm against Jesus: "He will give his angels charge of you, / to guard you in all your ways."

Jesus himself clearly lived by the psalms. Some of the most truly eloquent and desperate psalms (22, 35, 42, 55, 69) fit most perfectly in his mouth, achieve their fullest sense there. In the gospels, the evangelists frame the passion and death of Jesus in motifs from the psalms. And psalm phrases issue from his mouth: "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" (22); "Into your hands I commend my spirit" (31).

Among the last words of Jesus on the cross, however, are some that throw all the rest into a new light: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23, 34). Jesus here enacts what he preached about forgiveness of enemies. He turns on its head the nagging us-versus-them scenario of the enemy passages. Long after his death, of course, wickedness and instinctive opposition to the good continue to infect the atmosphere. "The mystery of sin is continually expanding," Pope John Paul II reminds us at some length in *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (21–24), even as he reflects on Christian joy. But we are not to lie down before evil or demonize sinners. Jesus teaches and exemplifies a counter-tendency or attitude—exercising the ready kindness and the forgivingness of God.

While in Nicaragua in late February, I heard a radio sermon by the Dominican preacher Father Rafael Aragon. The text for the day was from Saint Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount: "Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you" (6, 27–36). Aragon, even as he admitted the rancor still festering among many of those involved in Sandinista-Contra warfare, dwelt on particular expressions and incidents of pardon and reconciliation. Without faith this is not possible, said he. The commandment of Jesus flies in the face of natural tendency. To be able to pardon those who have killed a family member or destroyed one's livelihood is the height of the gospel.

In the above sermon, Father Aragon mentioned the Dominican Sisters of the Presentation in Rwanda. Even as they were being brutally killed, they prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." One is awed by such a response. In the poor country of Rwanda, scores are still being settled, questions of impunity are being raised, and the United Nations is preparing for war crimes trials. May the sisters' prayer bring the gospel into the heart of our times. May it reverberate still in more ordinary lives.



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The Demands of Inculturation

Joel Giallanza, C.S.C.

Even though inculturation has been much discussed and written about in recent years, particularly by apostolic religious in international congregations, it is not a word readily found in most dictionaries. This is understandable. Inculturation touches so many aspects and levels of life with such varied nuances that it defies simple definition.

Inculturation is more than something done by an individual or even by a group. Admittedly, it does involve adaptation to the values and cultural norms and needs of a people other than those known and familiar from one's birth and early development. But it also calls for a genuine transformation, an alteration of one's perspectives and attitudes and style of life. In and through that transformation, gospel values make their way into the culture to flourish among the people. This adaptation and transformation affirm the basic incarnational character of the inculturation process. Ministers of the gospel must do as Jesus did: go among the people to be like them, to live with them, to love them, to remain with them. The example of Jesus is ever the standard for continuing the mission in all cultures.

This article identifies some challenges and tasks of inculturation that confront apostolic religious in particular, although other gospel ministers do encounter similar ones. Specifically, my reflections are orga-

nized around three contexts: the individual religious, the local community, and the religious institute as a whole. The purpose of identifying these challenges and tasks is to enhance the quality of our presence and activity in continuing the mission of Jesus. The central priority of that mission must always be kept in mind, so that inculturation is not discussed and designated as an end in itself. Jesus' mission is the priority; inculturation is a means.

INDIVIDUAL RELIGIOUS

Many challenges and tasks of inculturation may touch the individual religious. They emerge from the particular culture in which the person lives and ministers, as well as from the individual's personality and capacity to respond to the varied aspects of that culture. Thus, although a limited number of challenges and tasks could be considered universally applicable, the dynamic of human interaction with the setting in which one lives brings to light a few in particular. Here they are discussed in the first person singular to emphasize their experiential character.

Discovery. I must acknowledge the world around me, and I must accept and affirm that it is larger than my personal world. I need to become an ad-

venturer and an explorer in this culture, receptive to new discoveries: new ways of expressing myself, doing what needs to be done, seeing and interpreting the reality around me, determining and deciding what is valuable and what is not. This acknowledgment, acceptance, and affirmation are the beginnings of embracing the culture that surrounds me.

That embrace is built on a healthy and whole self-knowledge, living and developing. It confirms that I have chosen to deal with the reality around me, not to deny it. Self-knowledge is an important component because true discovery is never a compensation or camouflage for some perceived personal or professional inadequacy. My spirit of discovery will be most dynamic if I can interact with, adapt to, and truly be touched by the world around me, knowing I am good, lovable, capable, and willing to grow and change.

The core challenge here is that I will inevitably discover that I need to change if I want to respond effectively to the world around me. The task is to make of discovery a never-ending approach to life. I discover and interact and adapt. From that emerges a new perspective with which I discover yet more and so interact and adapt anew. If I refuse to interact and adapt, then discovery is interrupted, and life becomes static. If I choose to continue, then gradually I move more fully into the culture, and the culture becomes more firmly established within me.

Detachment. For the process of discovery to be effective, to be true, there will and must be some letting go and some taking up; there must be detachment. As I go through life, I cannot simply continue purchasing increasingly bigger trunks for my possessions. Of course that would be possible, but it is not advisable. I will learn that I must occasionally let go of some possessions (material goods as well as behaviors, attitudes, and perspectives) so that I will have the freedom and space to take up some other such possessions that may be more valuable and important in my life as a religious and a minister. This letting go and taking up are part of healthy human development.

Detachment is not an arbitrary exercise of assigning value to certain realities and stripping it from others. Detachment demands much more; it involves the process of prioritizing realities that are all good and valuable. I prioritize on the basis of what will enhance the quality of my life and my ministry to continue Jesus' mission within a particular culture. Priorities based solely on expediency are insufficient and ineffective.

The core challenge here lies in making the journey from the familiar and comfortable to the unfamiliar

and uncomfortable—a journey that inevitably involves the process of letting go and taking up. The task is to do whatever is necessary to ensure that I persevere in this journey. Then I will be able to embrace yet more of the culture that surrounds me and so continue the mission.

Dying to self. Discovery, detachment, and the entire process of inculturation place me deep within the truth and the experience of the Paschal Mystery. There will be dying to do as I accept the responsibilities, challenges, and tasks of inculturation. If I disdain all this, I run from the power of the cross and from the hope and promise of new life.

The alternative to dying to self is making the personal choice to live in a self-contained way. But if I do that, I situate myself as the center, source, and sustenance of my world, and I do not acknowledge my need for any resources other than my own. This is nothing less than hardheartedness—a pride that allows no room for new life.

The core challenge here is articulated eloquently by Jesus himself: "Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it produces many seeds" (John 12:24). The task is to believe that whatever dying I need to do in the process and experience of inculturation is truly the seed of new life taking root within me—and to live out that belief.

LOCAL COMMUNITY

It is not possible to speak of an inculturated local community apart from the flesh-and-blood members within it. The following three challenges and tasks, then, assume the willingness of the individual members to accept the need for, and to engage in, the challenges and tasks of discovery, detachment, and dying to self—which they will do to various degrees. The challenges and tasks encountered by the local community as a group can be separated from the preceding ones only for the purposes of focus and reflection, for these too will touch each individual.

Living the diversity. Within international religious institutes, it is common to have multicultural and multinational local communities. The diversity of cultures within a local community should never be approached and addressed as a theory; it must be lived. To the extent that it is dealt with in a disembodied way, there will be confusion and lack of clarity concerning many issues. A simple principle can serve as a guide: the degree and depth of dialogue and exchange needed for clear communication and healthy relationships are directly proportional to the

Whatever challenges a local community encounters as it lives and ministers within a particular culture, loving the people remains the highest-priority task

amount of cultural diversity within a local community. This principle is also applicable when individuals from various subcultures of the same culture live together.

The alternative to this principle is deadly to community life. Differences can remain unaddressed and degenerate into divisions. Then we find ourselves spending time—wasting time—misreading behaviors, misinterpreting statements, or assigning motivations that have nothing to do with the person's actual intention and communication.

The basic challenge of living the diversity lies in the members' willingness to share their hearts with one another. The task is to make the efforts necessary to accept and celebrate the graced richness of differences among us. Thus, we must trust, listen, and seek to understand one another on a variety of levels. Otherwise, we live diversity only in a cosmetic way, and it has no true effect on our common life or our efforts to continue the mission of Jesus.

Learning the culture. A local community cannot remain isolated or insulated from its immediate setting as if the culture—and thus the people themselves—are not worthy of its presence. The community must work at learning the culture—an extensive undertaking that encompasses many aspects of life, both tangible and intangible. Two of those aspects, language and meaning, are especially important. Inculturation necessitates learning both the verbal and nonverbal languages of the people. This complex task involves learning not only the meanings of words, gestures, and behaviors, but also the significance of attitudes, perspectives, and interpretations. Clearly, this can be the work of a lifetime.

Local communities have the delicate task of finding a solid middle ground. That is, while local communities need not automatically and arbitrarily adopt the practices and priorities of the culture in which they are situated, neither should they ignore the truth and goodness to be learned from that culture. This middle ground is always a matter of seeking the most effective ways to witness to gospel values through methods and means that are clear to the people.

The basic challenge of learning the culture is to seek true inculturation, not imitation or importation. Imitation merely mimics the people's practices without learning their value and meaning. Importation clings so tenaciously to expatriate priorities and practices that it cannot acknowledge the values and approaches offered by the culture. Neither imitation nor importation require any significant personal or communal commitment. The task is to love and challenge the culture. By love we can be pastors to the people; through challenge we can be prophets to the culture.

Loving the people. Whatever challenges a local community encounters as it lives and ministers within a particular culture, loving the people remains the highest-priority task. This touches the very heart of the gospel. If we feel no love, we risk viewing the culture and the people as two separate realities and completely overlooking the obvious links between them.

Without love there can be no truly Christian inculturation and no prophetic presentation of the gospel. Without love there can be no continuation of Jesus' mission. Living the diversity among us and learning the culture around us—vitally important components of inculturation—are avenues that lead us to a more effective love for the people.

The basic challenge of loving the people is to be among them and to embrace them as the means of our salvation, not as the objects of our ministry. Loving God is key to our salvation, and Jesus teaches us that it is inseparable from loving others. The task is to allow our life together as religious to overflow into building community among and with the people. We must live the truth that God's reign is within and among and around us, in this people and culture and place.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTE

The efforts toward inculturation made by individual religious and local communities affect the entire institute. Thus, the following challenges and tasks cannot stand in isolation from the others. Even though the design and implementation of what follows may be among the primary responsibilities for

those in leadership positions, leaders will need to call on individual members and local communities to apply their skills and resources to addressing these challenges and tasks concretely and adequately.

Communicating identity and charism. The institute must be clear in any communication related to its self-identity and charism. Religious have reflected, discussed, and written extensively about this area, especially during the past thirty years. The serious work of uncovering and recovering the rich wisdom of founders and foundresses has given us a heightened awareness of our heritage. The engaging process of revising constitutions, rules, and related texts has helped us to link that heritage with the contemporary world.

To communicate our heritage, to demonstrate our identity and charism, we must identify which gifts the institute brings to a particular culture and how that culture provides an environment in which those gifts flourish. The gifts identified will vary from culture to culture; the institute's rich store of gifts reflects the diversity of cultures in which its members live and minister.

The challenge of communicating the institute's identity and charism is to know, appreciate, maintain, and develop the institute's living heritage. To remain alive, that heritage must be studied and known. Its value and application for today must be appreciated; awareness of it and interest in it must be fostered and maintained; and it must be developed to respond to unmet and emerging needs. An institute that is sufficiently fluent in understanding its identity and charism is aware that different aspects of its life can be highlighted as ways of living and continuing the mission of Jesus, depending on the specific cultures in which its members serve.

Cultivating a theology of religious life within the culture. As noted earlier, inculturation is incarnational. With their growing internationality, religious institutes are increasingly aware of the many ways in which religious life is affected by the local cultures that surround it. Approaches and explanations that assume a generic theology of religious life are insufficient and inadequate. Admittedly, some basic theological principles are applicable to religious life in any setting. Nevertheless, cultural specifics do provide precision and practicality to those principles.

Religious institutes must develop and cultivate theologies of the core components of their way of life that will be clear to the people being served. Then institutes will have a variety of ways in which to communicate their commitment to ministry, prayer, community, and vows.

The challenge of cultivating a theology of religious life within a given culture is to recognize that the heritage of a religious institute is alive and adaptable. The institute must know not only its heritage but also the people it serves and their cultures well enough to clearly express and communicate its identity, charism, and mission. If, through fundamentalism, an institute views its heritage as permanently untouchable, then it diminishes the power of its founding spirit to have any significant relevance for the world today. The fundamentalist approach to founders and foundresses imprisons their prophetic message within the historical period in which they lived.

Considering the members. As the leaders of international religious institutes make decisions that set a course for the future, both actual and projected members must be taken into account. Among the many questions to which leadership must be attentive are the following: How are congregational policies affected by the institute's changing demographics? In which ways does the articulation of the institute's identity and charism reflect those changes? Is the institute willing to acknowledge and welcome perspectives on and approaches to its way of life that come from cultures other than the original one or the current principal one?

The literature and legislation of an institute that is not sufficiently attentive to its current members may (at least implicitly) present the "community" and the "membership" as if they are two separate entities. Admittedly, this may be so subtle as to be barely noticeable. Nevertheless, it will prove to be confusing, especially to members from cultures that are relatively new areas of growth for the institute and to prospective religious from those cultures. Decisions about every dimension of the institute must always consider the members.

The challenge of considering the members is simply to apply realism and respect. The institute must strive to be realistic regarding the cultures, languages, ages, perspectives, priorities, and preferences of the members. The institute must also demonstrate respect for the members' views and interpretations of its heritage, traditions, and practices. This realism and respect should be regularly monitored as a means of making necessary adjustments, affirming the perspectives of members, and enhancing the quality of the institute's presence and activity in continuing the mission of Jesus.

MINISTRY IN HOSTILE SETTINGS

Any discussion of inculturation must recognize the reality of hostile cultures in our world today and

However serious and sincere their efforts in fidelity and communication, religious living and ministering in a hostile setting have no guarantee that the culture around them will adopt an attitude of openness or even tolerance

the particular challenge of living Christianity and religious life within such cultures. As individuals, local communities, and institutes, religious can experience what Jesus predicted for his followers: "You will be arrested, persecuted, and handed over to courts and prisons, dragged before kings and governors because of my name" (Luke 21:12). Such words can surely instill a hesitancy to living in cultures that have been less than welcoming to Christian ministers. The probing challenge, though, comes through Jesus' characterization of what he predicted: "This will be your opportunity to bear witness" (Luke 21:13).

There is no generic formula for responding effectively to life in a hostile setting. The polarized situations in our world are so complex and diverse that a unique approach could be formulated for each one. The following two principles can serve as a basis for formulating a response in a specific context. Of course, the institute's leadership will need to make prudent judgments concerning the practical wisdom of having members remain in a particularly hostile setting.

Fidelity. Living and ministering in hostile cultures often fosters within religious a fiery fidelity to every dimension of their commitment to their way of life.

Nevertheless, they must make this a mature fidelity by recognizing that their persecution and martyrdom are genuine possibilities, given the surrounding environment. Such fidelity provides the "opportunity to bear witness" of which Jesus spoke. In adversarial circumstances, fidelity presents and proclaims a life of integrity, which may speak to the integrity and humanity of those whose religious or political ideology has been hostile.

Communication. Living and ministering in such circumstances urges religious to seek all possible lines of communication with cultural forces that oppose their presence and activity. This principle is inseparably linked with the first. The communication may have nothing to do with an explicit presentation of the gospel. The purpose of such communication is to uncover the fundamental humanity shared by the religious and those who do not welcome their efforts.

However serious and sincere their efforts in fidelity and communication, religious have no guarantee that the hostile culture around them will adopt an attitude of openness or even tolerance. The persecution and martyrdom of religious and other Christian ministers over the centuries, and even in our own day, attest to the fierce resistance that marks all forms of hostility toward perceived and designated enemies. An important task for those in leadership positions within religious institutes is to monitor the living situations of the members so they can implement whatever measures are necessary to safeguard their lives.

MATTER FOR MEDITATION

Other challenges and tasks of inculturation will emerge from the unique experiences of particular individuals, local communities, and religious institutes. The discussion and reflection on inculturation will and must continue, for it is one dimension of continuing Jesus' mission. Several scriptural texts invite further reflection, discussion, and prayer on this topic.

Among the texts that could be considered mandates for inculturation, the verses of Genesis regarding God's call to Abraham are especially illuminating. "Leave your country, your family, your ancestors' home for a country which I shall show you," says the Lord (Genesis 12:1). Abraham is not told exactly where he is going. He is told only that he must leave behind everything known and familiar—his established relationships and other contexts with considerable meaning and value—for a land that God will show him. But God's mandate to leave many things behind is immediately accompanied by a rich promise: "I will bless you and make your name famous; you are to be a blessing." (Genesis 12:2). Like

Abraham, we can accept and take up the mandate if we have the faith to believe and to trust the promise.

The mandate sends us into the mission. When Jesus commissions the disciples, he instructs them, "Provide yourselves with no gold or silver, not even with coppers for your purses, with no carrying sack for the journey or spare tunic or footwear or staff. Laborers deserve their keep" (Matthew 10:9-10). The mission involves living in and from the immediate context and culture in which the gospel is proclaimed. Jesus' mission will continue if we are sincere in our efforts to implant the gospel and if we are firm in our hope that our work is truly the Lord's own.

The mandate and the mission necessitate a practical method of identifying with the people, sharing their life, and becoming one with them. In his usual way of being anything but shy, Saint Paul gives us a glimpse into his experience of such a method. "To the Jews I made myself as a Jew, to win the Jews. . . . To the weak, I made myself weak, to win the weak. I accommodated myself to people in all kinds of different situations, so by all possible means I might bring some to salvation. All this I do for the sake of the gospel, that I may share its benefits with others"

(1 Cor. 9:20, 22-23). We too can implement this method, not by clever design, but only through our love for the people.

The demands of inculturation touch us at the deepest levels of who we are and what we do as religious and as ministers. The mandate, mission, and method that characterize inculturation have the potential to guide us—as individuals, local communities, and religious institutes—toward transformation into the living likeness of Jesus. Thus, Jesus' presence and activity will continue wherever we live and minister among God's people.



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Acupuncture Gaining Wider Acceptance

The United States Food and Drug Administration is on the brink of acknowledging what the Chinese have known for 5,000 years—that acupuncture can be helpful to people afflicted with at least five problems: pain, nausea, stroke, asthma, and addiction. The government agency's soon-to-be-granted recognition is expected to make it easier than in the past for people to obtain reimbursement for acupuncture treatment fees from Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurers.

Americans make as many as 12 million visits a year to acupuncturists. Fifty schools of acupuncture are now operating, and 19 of them are accredited by a national commission recognized by the government. Nonphysician acupuncturists are licensed to practice legally in 30 states.

Acupuncture involves inserting thin needles into about 360 points along channels, or meridians, in the body. Through these channels, a form of energy called *Qi* (pronounced "chêe") is thought to flow. According to the Chinese, when needles are stuck into points along these meridians, *Qi* is unblocked and rerouted, resulting in the restoration of the body's balance of energy.

Writing for the *Boston Globe*, Judy Foreman explains a North American interpretation of how acupuncture works. Describing the work of Bruce Pomeranz, a University of Toronto physiologist, she reports: "Pomeranz

and others showed that acupuncture releases not just endorphins but a hormone called ACTH, which stimulates the adrenal glands to release cortisol, a hormone with antiinflammatory effects. The combination of endorphins and cortisol, researchers now think, may explain why acupuncture can reduce pain in inflammatory diseases such as arthritis." The endorphins released by use of acupuncture needles are the body's own opiates, having the same sort of pain-killing effect that an injection of morphine might have.

Pomeranz has shown that if needles are introduced into body points other than those found along the identified meridians, endorphins are not released, and pain is not blocked. But other researchers are currently finding that endorphins and related neurochemicals fail to tell the whole story. Some suspect that acupuncture may be effective because it brings about changes in blood flow; others find evidence inclining them toward the Chinese hypothesis that it works by triggering changes in the flow of energy.

Dr. Glenn S. Rothfeld, director of Spectrum Medical Arts in Arlington, Massachusetts, says, "Evidence is growing that the body's hormone system is regulated electromagnetically as well as biochemically, and that a metal needle in the right point can create this electromagnetic change."

Have a Successful Depression

Robert Fitzgerald, S.J.

Sea Turtle

After father found her in my
sister's cradle room with a butcher

knife, she had to go away. We
survived like the family in the story

he used to read to us before we fell
asleep, the one about the ship

wrecked family swaying high
in a tree house their father built.

(I survived, smiling, an inner radar
tuned to your face, my friend.

Your slightest frown sent me
sailing to ports I thought you chose.)

Now, let me be a turtle
rooted in sand, stars,

swaying in the dark
branches of the sea.

I was a walking zombie, suicidal. A real estate salesman struck up a conversation with me and spotted my depression. He confided, "I've just been through depression myself." As he left, he gave me his card. On the back was written, "Have a successful depression." I had no idea what that meant.

A year before, I had found that I could no longer handle my job as an alcoholism counselor on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. I had coordinated the chemical dependency unit, an employee assistance program, and a program to train Native American chemical dependency counselors for the Saint Francis Mission. But I had not taken care of myself or learned my limits. Result: burnout.

When I told my boss I could not continue, he looked at me. I was shaking. He said, "Just pull yourself together." Translation: "Pull yourself up by your bootstraps; tighten your screws." I had absolutely no idea where the bootstraps or screws were.

I had survived until middle age by earning the approval of father figures. I was the good, caretaking priest who fine-tuned his radar to win approval from bosses. The way: work, work, work. This "nice guy" script had served me well through thirteen years of high-school teaching.

As an alcoholism counselor on the Rosebud Reservation, however, I found that that script no longer worked. Rosebud ranked first among nine midwest-

ern reservations in the number of violent deaths from alcoholism. In this difficult setting, God worked healing among the people, who were helping each other to recover and to celebrate their sobriety.

In the meantime, I began to interpret too many requests for food and shelter as life-or-death pleas: if I didn't help, the people would die. A bit grandiose, but that is what I thought when a 1970 Buick pulled up to the mission building, with six kids hanging out of the windows, asking for food because I had sent their father away for treatment. I did what I could by ripping off a box of food from the mission building.

Of the chemical dependency counselors who had started with me on the reservation in 1979, I was the only one left. The life-or-death appeals at the door multiplied. I dreaded facing another needy person. In my last half year there, I hid much of the time.

Then I took seven months of intensive counseling. At the end of that period, I was asked to be house manager for a Jesuit community. I turned out to be a square peg in a round hole—a dreamy intuitive instead of a hard-nosed manager. Within two months I was suicidal. I was going to do it in an old white Chevette.

I found it hard to sleep. I walked in tight circles around my room. The only book I could read was about day-to-day survival: Will Steger's *North to the Pole*. Two friends noticed that I was acting like a zombie and drove me to the depression unit at Saint Mary's Hospital. Other friends did not know what to do. One tried to pray the demons out of me.

I was slowly accepting that God was working to help me "have a successful depression." I did some part-time volunteer work, including teaching writing to sixth-graders at two schools. I began to write out of my life. I published a collection of my poems, *All My Relatives*. In words, I began to find life. I stopped smoking and lost fifty pounds. Then I landed a grant for three years to write a book. I trusted that my desire to write was my place of grace. I could do what I really loved, and *that* was God calling. George Eppley's article "Wanted: Lions Who Have Learned to Write" (HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, Spring 1991) helped confirm my decision, as did Pamela Smith's "Out of the Depths of Depression" (HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, Spring, 1993).

When I finished the book and found a publisher, I heard, "Get a job." With my CPE credentials, I was tempted to try a chaplain's job at a prison or hospital. I would pay my way and look like a "good priest." One night, at about that time, I had a dream:

I am with a friend. We are to catch a train to New York City. I have my luggage and bike along. We go down one level to a tunnel, where I miss the train my

friend catches. A conductor tells me that I need to go down to another, lower level for my train. That means doing the impossible—grabbing my bike and luggage and going down a steep hill and then into another tunnel. I am afraid I will miss the train. I walk out to where the trains pull out of the tunnel. The view: a landscape that looks like a Grandma Moses painting.

Later, when I reflected on the dream, I concluded that the surface train tunnel might be a job choice for the approval of others. The baggage: self-doubt and approval seeking. The lower tunnel: a choice out of my center, what I really want to do. I chose a chaplaincy for room and board where I could write. I knew I would need other part-time jobs.

I remember the last morning of a counselor-training workshop at Storm Mountain Center in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Family therapist Virginia Satir had helped us work through our family histories through her method of family reconstruction. I was in the hallway drinking a cup of coffee. Satir stood at the coffee urn, filling her cup. I said, in a voice dripping with self-pity, "It's so hard to be returning to the alcoholism of the reservation." She wheeled around from the coffee urn, faced me, and fired off three words: "Well, stand up." Been learning that since. Standing up, with both my limits and my gifts, I can dance. This means something new: accepting joy.

I heard a story about an emigrant family that took a ship for America in the 1900s. They brought their own food—hardtack and cheese—and spent the whole trip in their room below deck. Only on the second-to-last day did one son leave to explore above.

After three hours, he had not returned. His father went above to find him sitting in the dining room at a table covered with a linen cloth, candles, wine, and a three-course meal. "My son, why have you done this?" the father exclaimed. "We cannot pay the bill!"

The son answered, "It comes with the ticket."

Above deck, in the sun, joy lasts longer. It comes with the ticket—and with a "successful depression." I am learning to move from my center. I am learning what Leonard Kriefel meant when he said that a young polio victim must learn to fall—to fall into life. I celebrate with these words my own fall into grace.



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The Fantasy Road to Sexual Integration

Matthew Linn, S.J.

Sexual fantasies have gotten bad press in spirituality. To stop his fantasies, Origen castrated himself, and Augustine wrote much of his *Confessions* over his struggle with sexual fantasies. More recently, when President Jimmy Carter admitted that he occasionally had sexual fantasies, his ratings plummeted, and he lost his moral high ground. People immediately accused him of breaking scripture's injunction, "But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). Even for those willing to forgive Carter, the ideal was to control fantasies so that they would never be acted upon lustfully. But the surest way to create uncontrollable, compulsive fantasies is to bury them under negative injunctions based on fear and guilt. Just try telling yourself for two minutes that you will not think of a pepperoni pizza. Now try another two minutes with the additional fear that you will go to hell if you think of a pepperoni pizza. What happened?

KEY TO DEEPER DESIRES

Just as pepperoni pizzas are appetizing because they taste good, so too sexual fantasies attract us because they are a response to good flesh made in

the image and likeness of God. They are also the key to our deeper desires and needs. Saint Ignatius began his journey to God with sexual fantasies of wooing various ladies of the royal court. These were vivid enough to distract him from racking bone pain due to the breaking and resetting (without anesthesia) of his leg. Gradually, as he listened to these fantasies, he was drawn to deeper fantasies of serving the Greatest King and his court. He listened to both sets of fantasies, and after finding a deeper, more lasting peace with the latter fantasies, offered his sword in service to Our Lady of Montserrat. His conversion came from listening to all his fantasies until the deepest ones arose to be chosen. This doesn't mean that the deepest fantasies always lead to celibacy; for some, they lead to finding the loving spouse who can answer our deepest longings.

Fantasies arise from needs and wishes that must be listened to, not banished until they compulsively demand our attention. Like distractions in our prayer, fantasies are valuable pointers to inclinations we are ignoring. There is a time for ignoring distractions and fantasies, but adequate time should be devoted to listening to those that persist, because they come from persistent needs. Spiritual direction is one setting in which this can be done.

A vowed celibate came to me, seeking help because he had been having sexual affairs. I asked him to think of the partners he chose and to describe the qualities about them that he found most attractive. Then I told him to add or subtract qualities until that person matched his ideal sexual fantasy. Next I asked him how, besides acting out sexually, he wanted to relate to her. He told me that his ideal companion stroked him gently, sang a lullaby, was witty, nurturing, earthy, and a nurse. I said, "This is what you are longing for."

He began to cry and said, "I just realized I described my mother, who died three years ago."

I asked, "When did you start having these affairs?"

He replied, "Three years ago, right after her death."

We then spoke of how he could work with his unresolved grief and how he could appropriately answer his needs. We explored who could be safe, nurturing friends and what activities, such as gardening, would help him connect with the earthiness in his gardening mother. Finally, we both prayed for the Spirit to help him with all he wanted. Six months later, the young man wrote to me that he was enjoying his friends and his garden. He had remained free from any sexual acting out and was continuing to gain wisdom from his sexual fantasies, which were no longer compulsive.

Not every resolution is this quick. Often, our fantasies—whether positive or negative—arise from deep, early childhood needs that may require time and even psychotherapy to resolve. For example, a man complained to me that he couldn't pray after having sex with his wife. Because he couldn't feel love for his wife, he felt that God could not love him. "She is so fat, it's disgusting. I want to push her off me and run from her." This statement seemed strange to me because his wife was only slightly overweight. I asked the man to feel the disgust and think of what past experience connected with wanting to push her off and run. His jaw dropped, and he said, "I am eight years old and I am being raped by a fat boy in the woods. I just want to push him off and run, but I am trapped." As he continued to heal from this experience with the help of a therapist, he returned to visit me and spoke of having gone on a wonderful lakeside vacation, during which he was again able to relate tenderly to his wife and to pray.

DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS DISCLOSED

Romantic love is another example of how sexual fantasies can invite us to receive healing. Psychologist Harville Hendricks believes that romantic love is a bodily sense that we have found our imago—the

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person who can heal our emotional wounds. Our initial fantasies of this person's perfection—although they eventually need to be tempered—serve a wonderful purpose, in that they draw us to someone who really can be a channel for our healing. We choose a partner who is enough like our mother or father to trigger our longing for what we still need, yet different enough from them to be able to give what they couldn't give adequately. Fantasies reveal these deep needs and can help couples discover marriage's healing potential. Marriages break up when partners don't know how to let their fantasies guide them in caring for each other's unmet needs.

What we long for often reveals our developmental needs. One way of seeing the progression of our psychosexual development is to reflect on which movie stars we have found sexually attractive. My adolescent sexual awakening started with an attraction to Marilyn Monroe—woman as a body who admired masculinity. As I entered the stage of young adulthood, with its task of intimacy, I fell in love with Julie Andrews in *The Sound of Music*—woman as intimate friend, full of life and song. In midlife, as I entered the stage of generativity, I was more attracted to women who would make ideal mothers, such as Sally Field as the widow who kept family and farm together in *Places in the Heart*. Still later, when viewing *On Golden Pond*, I was attracted not to sexy Jane Fonda but to wise old Katherine Hepburn, faithful to "old coot" Henry Fonda as he suffered a heart attack. I am sure that for me, Marilyn Monroe, Julie Andrews, and Sally Field will have their day again, because psychosexual development is a spiral rather

Celibates and married people need each other's experience; each of us has only a small piece of the vast mystery of our sexuality, in which we give our deepest self to another

than a straight line. Fantasies of movie stars reveal to me where I am in the spiral and what my current needs are.

Besides the movies, there are many other avenues to exploring fantasies, including dreams and relationships with real people. One woman I know, three months after losing her husband, begged Jesus to help her in her intense loneliness. She surrendered her loneliness to Jesus and that night dreamed of being held and hugged in the arms of Jimmy Stewart. She told me, "He was so kind, caring, and understanding of my loneliness that I awoke knowing that I would be okay on my own. The healing was so deep that I never again experienced that intense loneliness. Also, when working in the nursing home, I could now be with those I had avoided because they were so lonely." But we needn't wait for a dream of Jimmy Stewart when we have a friend. Another woman shared with me that she had longed for a hug from a friend, finally asked for it, and then in prayer reexperienced it, along with a deeper hug from Jesus. Such positive fantasies are healing.

POSITIVE FANTASIES AND CELIBACY

It is difficult to have positive fantasies of celibacy because our culture does not support celibacy. It is a rare movie in which unmarried lovers opt for a celibate embrace rather than a sexual encounter. Magic Johnson and other celebrities tout "safe sex," not abstinence. When celibates make the news, it is too often for scandalous vow-breaking or sexual abuse. Theologians have not been too helpful in offering attractive

images or fantasies for celibacy. They have stopped speaking of celibacy as a higher way of life and have failed to find images that capture the value of celibacy. Some stress that celibacy represents the nature of the relationships we will enjoy in Heaven—yet I don't hear them proposing that some of us should fast more in order to replicate the heavenly condition of not needing to eat. Others maintain that celibacy makes one more apostolically free. Yet many of these same theologians have accepted tenured positions that tie them to one university theology department for life. When asked why they are celibate, many priests and religious reply that it is part of the life they have chosen. This response indicates that celibacy is endured rather than chosen for its own attractions.

IMAGINING IS ESSENTIAL

Just as it took a revolution to stop putting celibacy on a pedestal as a higher way of life, so we now need another revolution to find a positive contemporary image of celibacy. The wisdom gained from addiction treatment programs reminds us that we cannot live what we cannot imagine. In *The Recovery Resource Book*, Barbara Yoder states:

Within the last 20 years more research has been done in the functions of the mind/brain. The research has found that the brain often functions like a movie camera. We accumulate a high proportion of information through visual experience and then create outside behavioral realities to match our internal picture.

This explains a lot. Sometimes we will hear from people new in recovery, "I just can't see myself sober." These people really can't. They have lost or been unable to create internal visual pictures of themselves sober; as a result, they don't stay sober. Unless an individual can see himself or herself as sober, he or she can't stay sober . . . it's good to take some time during the day to relax and create a fantasy of sobriety. This can be achieved by simply closing the eyes, focusing on the breathing, and seeing oneself going through day-to-day life sober. It is important to visualize colors, what is being said, what is being heard, along with a feeling of relaxation and contentment at being sober.

Can we encourage and assist celibates to develop their own positive fantasies of celibacy so that what is imagined can be lived out? We have Jesus with Mary Magdalene, but what of vibrant, contemporary images from our own experience?

A POSITIVE IMAGE OF CELIBACY

When do I personally feel that celibacy supports my connection with my deeper self, others, God, and

the universe? Currently, Christ calls me to be community superior, to write, and to give retreats. As a celibate religious, my community is my primary family, so celibacy connects me with this particular group of men. The intimate conferences I have with community members are therefore also images of celibacy.

With my brother Dennis and his wife, Sheila, I have written twelve books. Each time a book is published, I experience it as if I were bringing a child into the world and parenting a family beyond my nuclear family. Celibacy drives me to find nongenital ways to give and receive love—in deep sharing, through the written word, and through retreats. Whenever I share my own story and invite the story of another, my celibate energy flows deeper.

I also share my story during retreats I give with Dennis and Sheila. There is great creativity and intimacy as we share in planning and conducting each retreat. I give some retreats by myself as well. While giving a recent retreat alone, I stayed in a Cleveland motel on a dark winter's night—a lonely experience. To cope with my loneliness, I went swimming. That didn't help: the pool was surrounded by what seemed to be the most beautiful women in the world. I returned to my room and sat on the king-size bed to process my loneliness. The vastness of the bed further reinforced my feeling that I was alone while nearly everyone else in the motel had a partner.

Finally, I began to share my loneliness with Jesus, and I saw that all my longings to have a partner while giving retreats were also longings for Jesus. Since Dennis and Sheila were not present to contribute to planning the retreat, I began talking to Jesus as I would to them and listening for his reactions. I felt deeply how much Jesus loved the retreatants and came up with the idea of a whole new retreat that he wanted to give. I experienced the loneliness of celibacy being fulfilled in a deep relationship with Jesus as brother. This also has roots in my deep relationship with Dennis as brother and draws me closer to Dennis—just as Dennis draws me, as a celibate, also to Jesus. The more I have deep relationships, the easier it is to live the depth of a celibate re-

lationship. So for me, this month's image of celibacy is of myself sitting on a king size bed at the Hampton Inn, holding one of my books while planning the Cleveland retreat. This positive image of celibacy energizes me each time I return to it.

Celibates and married people need each other's experience; each of us has only a small piece of the vast mystery of our sexuality, in which we give our deepest self to another. At a wedding, when I hear a couple commit their lives to God and to each other, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness or in health, and until death, I am empowered to make the same commitment to my God. This call to God's faithful love grows in me when I see a husband lovingly caring for his wife with Alzheimer's disease—or, as her death approaches, lovingly holding her hand and passing it over to God's hand. Celibate or married, our sexual fantasies and positive images can be windows for discovering and deepening our desire to give and receive Infinite Love.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Carnes, P. *Don't Call It Love*. New York, New York: Bantam, 1991.
- Linn, D., M. Linn, and S. Fabricant. *Healing the Eight Stages of Life*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1988.
- Linn, D., M. Linn, and S. Linn. *Belonging: Bonds of Healing and Recovery*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1993.
- Yoder, B. *The Recovery Resource Book*. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990.



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A Visit to Elderhostel

Reverend Frank E. Nieset, M.Div.

great vacation: change of pace, wide range of options, room and board considerably above seminary or convent standards, moderate cost—these are some of the features of a vacation program that seems tailor-made for clergy and religious, at least those who have turned sixty.

The program is called Elderhostel. It runs at college campuses (public and private) in weekly segments, from late Sunday through Friday, all year long. Over 1,800 colleges offer Elderhostel programs in every state in the nation, as well as in the provinces of Canada and over 45 foreign countries. Each program is scheduled at or near a university, using university faculty and facilities or the local environment. Program subjects are diverse, ranging from the anthropology of native Americans to the creatures of the oceans.

Several times a year, Elderhostel publishes a free seasonal catalogue of upcoming programs, listed alphabetically by state. Here is a representative example:

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, KEARNEY

Located in the scenic Platte River Valley, the University of Nebraska at Kearney is among the very earliest Elderhostel institutions. This legacy brings experienced Elderhostel faculty to this program as well as to other unique programs through the year. Housing is air-conditioned residence halls, private suites/shared bath.

Classrooms are in the same facility; meal service is only a short walk. All are handicapped accessible. Spring weather is mild and beautiful. Field trips to Willa Cather's home, library and museum. \$295.

Typically, each program consists of courses on three topics. For instance, the program at the University of Nebraska at Kearney offers the following:

Literature of the Plains—Willa Cather . . . pioneer of the plains and nationally renowned for her scholarship. Visit Cather's home, library and museum in her beloved Red Cloud. Taught by a Cather scholar.

Poetry and Art of the High Plains. Distinguished Cather scholar assists participants in experiencing the satisfaction of creating their own written work in context of the cultural expressions of the early pioneer days on the plains—including art, poetry and literature.

Pioneer Heritage and the Westward Trails. The Mormon, Oregon and Overland Trails will be studied for their impact on the development of historic Fort Kearney and settlement of the plains. Field trips to Boot Hill, Dobytown, Fort Kearney and Dirty Woman Ranch will supplement the week.

Each course usually covers three aspects of a topic (e.g., relevant battles, literature, music). Here are some of the course topics listed on a single page of a

recent catalogue, giving some idea of the available variety:

HISTORY: Civil War, World War II, Vietnam War

TRANSPORTATION: steamboat, trains, covered wagons

THE ARTS: biographies and works of writers, musicians, painters (usually included: concerts, exhibits, plays)

CULTURES: Native Americans, Amish, cowboys, pioneers

HEALTH: living with cancer, nutrition, Jazzercise

CRAFTS: basketweaving, carving, pottery, rug making

FLORA AND FAUNA of various areas; also geology, archaeology

SKILLS: photography, computers, gemology

Often, a single Elderhostel site will offer a number of triple-topic programs during the same week, so that a husband and wife or two companions could generally meet for meals and then go their separate ways.

Attendance is not taken at Elderhostel courses, and no grades are given. The programs are simply educational opportunities to meet with others interested in the same topics. On free afternoons or evenings, participants may go on optional course-related tours. The local chambers of commerce provide participants with brochures listing restaurants and places of note that may also be visited during free time.

The teachers of Elderhostel courses are usually either on a break or sabbatical from their usual duties or have a light enough assignment for the semester to take on additional responsibility. Resources of the host university's library and appropriate work spaces are available to participants. The Elderhostel brochure indicates the availability of golf, tennis, and swimming facilities.

I have gone on four different Elderhostel vacations in the past three years and found that they are economical, the people are congenial, the food and rooms are superior to seminary quality, the topics are well handled, and the time slot works well with my ministry schedule.

Attendance at the customary registration session on the Sunday afternoon or evening of arrival is not mandatory; it is primarily a time of introduction for the staff and participants. During this session, all the housekeeping details (already spelled out in the

notice of acceptance) are reviewed. One can arrive early Monday morning without suffering any great loss. Similarly, each program essentially concludes on Friday afternoon. Typically, a farewell dinner is held on Friday night, often followed by a talent show. Checkout time is Saturday morning.

Customarily, smoking (and in some cases drinking) is not allowed in any part of any of the buildings. Single rooms are sometimes available at an extra cost, but most people share. Security is excellent.

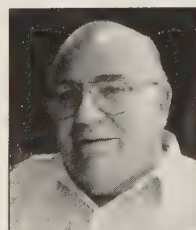
Some programs (especially art or writing) limit the number of participants to ensure individual attention, but otherwise it is not unusual to have thirty-five people in a group. Since all in the group are there because of interest in the same topic, engaging in conversation is very easy.

Some participants are in their high 80s and have gone to dozens of Elderhostel programs here and abroad. Their evaluations are universally positive. Last year almost a quarter of a million people enrolled in Elderhostel. The continuing growth of the program and participants' enthusiasm for it are its best endorsements.

David W. Ellis was vice provost of the University of New Hampshire in 1975 when the first Elderhostel programs were held. Now, he says, "I'm sure that it's difficult to imagine a world without Elderhostel." The enthusiasm of those who have participated is reflected by their donations to the Independence Fund, which supplies 20 percent of the operating budget to make up the difference between anticipated income and necessary expenses.

By the year 2020 there will be approximately 51 million Americans over the age of 60. Ellis has served on the Elderhostel Board for twelve years. With deserving pride, he summarizes the program as follows: "For the past twenty years, Elderhostel has been bringing a little more intellectual stimulation, friendship, drama, and joy into your life and the lives of others."

For a catalogue and registration forms, write to Elderhostel, 75 Federal Street, Boston, MA 02110.



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An Innovative Process for Chapters

Jean Alvarez, Ed.D., and Nancy Conway, C.S.J., M.S.W.

Several years ago, we published an article in *HUMAN DEVELOPMENT* (Winter 1990), describing the use of theological reflection as a process for addressing issues in provincial and congregational chapters. We suggested that theological reflection was proving to be not only a way of identifying helpful answers to the profound questions arising in religious congregations, but also an experience of deep bonding among chapter participants, who found themselves reenergized and recommitted to the congregation's mission for the long haul.

Since writing that article, we have used theological reflection in another twenty-five chapters—including four for international (multicultural and multilingual) congregations—and our enthusiasm for the process has not lessened. Many groups that have experienced theological reflection in chapter continue to employ it as a method of building consensual decisions when significant questions must be addressed between chapters. Clearly, theological reflection is a superb process for accomplishing one of the purposes of a chapter: reflecting on the nature/spirit/charism of the congregation through the lens of a particular critical question, building a consensus on how the congregation must move forward on that question, and creating a deep commitment to that decision. By its nature, however, theological reflection

is a poor process for achieving one of the other outcomes that have been a valued part of the chapter experience since Vatican II: bringing to the congregation's awareness some of the prophetic concerns and insights that are just beginning to emerge in the thinking and experience of a few of the members. This critical function has brought such issues as racism, AIDS, and new images of God to the awareness of most congregations. But theological reflection-centered chapters, which best address one or two concerns that the congregation as a whole has named as critical, often fail to address "cutting-edge" matters. This has not been altogether bad; some congregations have developed other mechanisms for finding the cutting edges, and other congregations may have needed a breather—time to move forward on unresolved but basically familiar questions. However, we have been increasingly eager to balance theological reflection with a process that welcomes new ideas to the congregation's table.

Open-space methodology seems nearly ideal for this purpose because it is, in several ways, a complement to theological reflection. Whereas theological reflection requires the entire group to address a single theme, open-space methodology encourages the group to address many centers of interest. Theological reflection is a deep, reflective process; open-

space methodology is an expansive, high-energy process. Theological reflection moves toward focus and commitment; open-space methodology encourages an exploring, brainstorming mindset that may or may not move to action.

ORIGINS OF OPEN-SPACE PROCESS

Harrison Owen, the Episcopal priest who developed open-space methodology (which he calls open-space technology), credits two inspirations for his work. First, he observed that in African villages, people gather in a circle to explore ideas and solve problems. He came to believe that something unique and profound can happen when a community gathers—not facing a leader, not with some facing the backs of others, but facing one another in a setting whose very structure suggests openness. Second, he was challenged by hearing attendees at North American and European conferences say, “The conference was pretty good, but the highlight for me was the conversation I had with a couple of people during the coffee break yesterday.” Reflecting on the fact that a group’s noise and energy levels usually rise during a coffee break, and noting how difficult it is to get a group to return from a break, Owen began to wonder how he could bring the energy of the coffee break to the business portion of the meeting.

A third apparent influence on Owen’s thought, although he doesn’t credit it directly, seems to be the workings of the free market. As he describes a coffee break, it is clearly a large, fluid, free market: if you are engaged in a boring conversation with someone, you make your excuses and move toward something more attractive—the coffee pot or another, potentially more interesting conversation. That more interesting conversation is likely to attract others to join in, simply because they perceive it as having some value to them. As Owen sees it, most conferences (or chapters) are unable to capitalize on the self-regulating action of the free market because their agendas, generally planned months in advance, simply don’t have the flexibility to adapt to interests that emerge or heighten during the meeting. Is this important?

At a Leadership Conference of Women Religious/Conference of Major Superiors of Men (LCWR/CMSM) Assembly in San Francisco, California, a two-minute challenge by Kevin Gordon, a gay man, evoked such a desire for further conversation that he agreed to meet with any interested participants at noon the next day. About two hundred of the seven hundred people attending the assembly gave up lunch to gather with him in what proved to be a truly electric session.

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NINE BASIC STAGES

Owen began developing open-space methodology in the mid-1980s. The process consists of the following stages:

1. Planners of the conference or chapter identify a broad theme for the open-space meeting (e.g., “What are the critical issues and the opportunities related to sustaining our commitment to justice?”).
2. At the conference or chapter, participants gather in chairs arranged in a single circle. Markers and sheets of newsprint are placed on the floor, inside the circle.
3. A facilitator, in the center of the circle, explains that in a few minutes, anyone who has energy or passion around any aspect of the meeting’s theme and is willing to take a small amount of responsibility for that topic will be invited to offer a session in open space. Others who share that passion or have some interest in the topic will have an opportunity to join the session.
4. The facilitator states the four principles that govern open-space methodology:

- Whoever comes is the right people.
- Whatever happens is the only thing that could have.
- Whenever it starts is the right time.
- When it’s over, it’s over.

The facilitator also explains The Law of the Two Feet: If, during the course of the meeting, you find that you are not contributing anything and not learning anything, use your two feet to go someplace where your time will be spent more productively.

How wonderful to have an agenda so rich that the participants must choose among many attractive offerings—or use their two feet to carry them to two or more sessions held in the same time slot

5. Those interested in offering a session in open space are each invited to come to the center of the circle, write their topic (in a few words) on a sheet of newsprint, state their name and topic into the facilitator's microphone, and then tape their sheet anywhere on a large schedule that has been created on the wall. In this way, all the participants hear what topics will be offered and see the meeting's agenda take shape. (Some examples of topics might be, "How can we use the vacant land we own in a rural area to further our work for justice?" or "What does our charism of justice mean for those of us who are retired?")

Several things may happen at this point. Sometimes there is a frightening minute or two before people begin to come forward to offer topics. More frequently, the conference's most orderly participants may begin to feel alarmed as it becomes apparent that the agenda is getting too full or too haphazard—there are too many sessions or they are being arranged in an illogical way, with related topics competing during the same time slot.

6. When it seems that all participants with a topic in mind have announced it and put it on the schedule, a brief period of informal negotiation, which Owen calls "the marketplace," begins. The facilitator encourages participants to go to the wall and sign up for as many sessions as they would like to attend, with the understanding that they may need to do a little negotiating to resolve conflicts among the sessions they have selected. Through this process, some conveners may agree to combine their related ses-

sions, while others may decide to reschedule theirs. The conflicts that remain—and some will—are seen not as a failure of open-space methodology but as a sign of its success: How wonderful to have an agenda so rich that the participants must choose among many attractive offerings—or use their two feet to carry them to two or more sessions held in the same time slot.

7. Now the meeting's agenda has been set (at least temporarily; new sessions are likely to be added as the meeting goes on). Participants disperse to the meeting rooms designated for the sessions they chose to attend in the first time slot.

8. In each session, the convener has two small responsibilities: to get the conversation started and, at the end of the session, to produce a brief record of it. Generally, the convener begins simply by sharing the reason he or she suggested the topic—keeping in mind that everyone who came to the session also has thoughts, questions, dreams, or curiosity about that subject. Once the convener has gotten the ball rolling, the session belongs to all those in attendance. If enough participants are interested in a particular aspect of the topic, much of the discussion will go in that direction. If some participants find that the topic is not as interesting as they had imagined, they can follow The Law of the Two Feet. If one person with an ax to grind monopolizes the session, all the other participants may choose to go elsewhere. If the conversation runs out of steam before the allotted time ends, the participants will remember the fourth governing principle of open-space methodology: "When it's over, it's over." If the topic is so stimulating that people want to continue the discussion, someone can take responsibility for convening a second session on the same subject later in the meeting.

9. At the end of the session, the convener produces a brief written record, including a list of those who participated (so that someone who has an interest in the topic but didn't attend can contact someone who did) and a summary of the high points of the discussion (usually in the form of a brief list or a paragraph or two). This record is written on newsprint and hung on the wall—or, better yet, entered into a computer by the convener or another participant, so that the written records of all the sessions can be merged at the end of the meeting to produce a full set of conference proceedings for all the participants.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

How long does all this take? It depends on the desired outcome. If the hope is to stimulate conversation and creativity within a fairly homogeneous or

geographically localized group, a one-day meeting comprising three or four time slots for sessions would probably be sufficient. For a more heterogeneous group, or for a group so geographically scattered that members see each other only occasionally, a two-day meeting is generally advisable. At some point, the law of diminishing returns goes into effect—so this process (like any other) is best ended while participants are still wishing for more, not after they have lost interest. If the meeting ends too soon, participants tend to create the additional open space they need. For example, at a recent province gathering with time for only two open-space sessions, the “under-50” members took their supper plates into a hallway and ate as they sat on the floor, discussing their hopes for the future.

How does open-space methodology fit into the design of the chapter as a whole? Every chapter has its own mission, its own particular purpose in the congregation’s life. A congregation may need to look primarily to the needs of the larger world at one point, to the conflicts and stresses within the congregation at another point, to the challenges that will stretch the group beyond its current complacency at yet another point, and to the bonds that confirm the members’ recommitment to one another and to their shared mission at still another point. The wise congregational leadership assesses, in dialogue with the members, the appropriate purpose for each particular chapter.

Once the purpose has been clarified, the leadership or a chapter planning committee is ready to explore the question of whether open-space methodology is a structure that will serve that purpose. Even if they are enthusiastic about the possibilities of open-space methodology, they must be prepared to conclude that it is not the right process for the moment. For example, several years ago, we facilitated a chapter that had been planned as the central moment of a congregational retreat. We realized that although the congregation would find open-space methodology rewarding in another context, it would have been disruptive to apply the process in the middle of an otherwise quiet, reflective, prayerful week. Similarly, the leadership of another congregation saw that its recent gatherings had been expressions and celebrations of the diversity of the members’ gifts and interests. They saw the role of an upcoming chapter as honoring and strengthening the unity and common values within the group. For them, the open-space process would have kept the members in the familiar and comfortable territory of diversity, distracting them from the rich challenge of exploring their commonality.

In designing a chapter that includes an open-space component, it is important to help participants distinguish between topics that are appropriate to the intent of the session and topics that do not fit the plan

ENHANCING PROCESS EFFECTIVENESS

When the use of open-space methodology is appropriate, the process is generally most effective in combination with other, complementary processes (theological reflection is a good example, but certainly not the only one.) The constitutions of most congregations refer to “fostering the unity of the congregation” as one of the primary functions of the chapter. Open-space methodology, used alone, appears to contradict this value, because by nature it is a process that encourages diversity, uniqueness, and choice.

In addition, most congregations face perplexing, profound questions that seem critical to the group’s survival and/or growth. Such questions are best addressed through focusing, deepening processes. While they can certainly be explored at gatherings other than chapters, it seems extravagant to plan a chapter without putting any of these questions on the agenda.

One situation in which open-space methodology does seem to be the only appropriate process is that of a congregation whose members have been reluctant to explore their diverse gifts and unique interests and commitments. In such a case, the leaders might decide that the congregation would benefit most from a chapter designed primarily to provide an experience of the unity of the body being well served by the diversity of its members.

When open-space methodology is used in tandem with theological reflection, it is usually best for the

open-space process to follow theological reflection, for several reasons:

- Theological reflection usually addresses an issue considered critical by the congregation's members. Beginning with theological reflection honors that diagnosis by the group and affirms the connection between the chapter and the membership at large.
- This timing also makes it possible for open-space sessions to address ideas that may have been sparked by theological reflection.
- Scheduling open-space sessions before theological reflection might have the effect of making the latter seem like "old business." Another possible consequence, especially with a group drawn more to newness than to closure, is that chapter participants enchanted with new ideas from the open-space sessions may set aside the theological reflection topic chosen by the congregation. Occasionally, of course, a major agenda change in mid-event is exactly what a chapter needs—but in general, a congregation is probably not well served by a chapter design that encourages such a change.

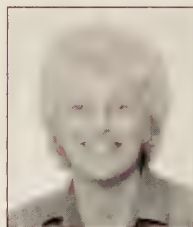
There is one final consideration in designing a chapter that includes an open-space component: how to help participants distinguish between topics that are appropriate to the intent of the session and topics that do not fit the plan. This is important because many people hear a mixed message in the statement, "We want you to bring your individual interests and passions, but only within these boundaries." For example, a participant new at needlework may wish to share his enthusiasm by offering a session on counted cross-stitch—but if open-space methodology has been chosen to encourage creative expressions of the group's charism of reconciliation, a needlework session is really not appropriate. The solution created by one chapter planning committee was to schedule, early in the chapter, an evening for sharing interests and hobbies. Needleworkers, cooks, calligraphers, practitioners of massage, and many

others offered sessions that evening. They were then quite ready to bring their hopes and questions about homelessness to open-space sessions on that topic.

CREATIVITY FOSTERS PROGRESS

Like most processes being used in chapters, open-space methodology is certainly appropriate in other settings as well. There is some advantage to using it for the first time at a chapter or similar gathering, where the presence of a facilitator helps the group to experience the process working smoothly and unobtrusively, serving the content rather than occurring as an end in itself. Once group members have used the open-space process, they are easily able to employ it again, whenever it suits their needs.

Chapters serve multiple purposes. They are not only ecclesial events but also opportunities for a congregation to further its mission clarification and mission accomplishment. As the church and religious life continue their journey into the next century, the creativity of participants in these events will be of great value. Congregational leaders will do well to be aware of open-space methodology as they begin to design the shape of future chapters.



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Transforming a Violent Society

Mercedes Pavlicevic, Ph.D.

The South Africans have a legend about a foolish mantis who wanted to sit on the moon. Every night she waited, searching the sky and becoming disconsolate in her waiting, frustrated by the sliver of a moon that might appear one night or the indented moon that might appear the next. At last the moon appeared, whole and splendid, inside the old thorn tree. Ecstatic, the mantis clambered up the tree's rough branches and sat, contented and swooning, on the African moon.

For those of us who are in South Africa at this extraordinarily powerful time, there is a sense that the moon, the whole moon, will not reveal itself: it is withholding itself, keeping its privacy behind the drama, the action, the bloodshed, the anxiety.

Like the mantis, however, most of us continue to search and wait, intuiting that the moon's absence is unnatural, that some more cohesive whole might appear: a moon we might trust, a moon whose light will bathe and soothe us, wherever and however it presents itself to us. We await a moon to soften the shadows that engulf this land.

CIVIL TURMOIL INTERNALIZED

Through my work as a music therapist in Johannesburg, I have come to understand that searching and

waiting for the moon is an ongoing, exhausting, solitary process that is not valued in this rapidly evolving and volatile sociopolitical context. Many of us in South Africa feel that our interior impulses take second place as we continue to be overwhelmed by an unstable and at times life-threatening environment. Our energy tends to strain toward the brittle exterior in an ongoing attempt to grasp its fluctuating implications, and this creates further stresses for the self. An environment denuded of stable, enriching, life-enhancing experiences is a bleak one indeed—one that sabotages our inner life and prevents us from flourishing and from regenerating ourselves.

This straining toward the external world is, inevitably, unsatisfactory. Public life offers false assurances that there might be others out there to accompany our inner uncertainties, or at least to relieve us of them. Instead, we find an environment that does not accommodate or cater to vulnerability: we are expected to cope, to survive, to be armed, to look after ourselves, for these are difficult times. Thus, many of us face our existential loneliness within the massive collective transformation that the country is experiencing.

In this isolated, unaccompanied, and vulnerable state, we risk overidentifying with the outer scenarios of political and social instability. Furthermore, we

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risk introjecting the external uncertainties so that they become our own instabilities. For some, this fracas is a welcome distraction: it offers our bleak interior worlds, at the very least, some dynamism and interior momentum and deflects our attention away from our own personal issues. This “false” turmoil fuels and drives us, providing us with “inauthentic” energy—energy that is not from our own inner lives but is introjected from the exterior.

It is my understanding that at some point, the ongoing instability we have internalized and identified with becomes unbearable and exhausting. At that point we may collapse altogether, unable to carry on. Indeed, we may withdraw altogether into our inner worlds in an attempt to shut out exterior threats, or we may deny the exterior uncertainties and barricade ourselves more or less successfully against their impingement on our minds. Or, alternatively, we may need to exorcise this false energy by splitting and projecting it onto the mass political movements (which are, after all, the more tangible manifestations of the country’s transformation) and their leaders. These then replace our own false and authentic heroes and demons, enabling us to act out our vengeance and despair toward the “evil” leaders while feeling protected by the presence of “good” leaders.

Our complex internal processes are silent and invisible, whereas the country’s profound transformation is shaped and played out with great drama and energy on the global television screens. Cen-

turies of enforced separateness between people’s minds are being revisited and reconsidered. Like most individual psychological processes, the collective journey is painful indeed, slow and uncertain. It is also dogged by global politics and economics, which seem to have no space for a natural unfolding of ways but insist on chronology and a linear explanation of events. It is this perception, elicited by media coverage, that denies the critical and vulnerable individual experience and does not grant permission for grieving, for letting go a fractured past and recreating a more authentic, gentle wholeness of the people.

The private scenarios I have been privileged to witness in my clinical practice in South Africa have shown me that some of us constantly shift between the axes that bridge our exterior and interior lives and our individual and collective consciousnesses, while others remain firmly active, unwilling and unable to acknowledge that the moon might be within us rather than out there in the firmament. The mantis, in the end, is deluded. Her ecstasy is a false one: The moon eludes her, while the old thorn tree offers narrow peacefulness and a limited completion.

CREATIVE IMPROVISATION HEALS

In 1992, as part of my music therapy practice, I established Creative Improvisation Groups to provide a creative space to acknowledge and address the absence of a nurturing and enhancing environment. The groups allow adults from all walks of life to “play,” usually for a series of six weekly two-hour sessions. Participants have included staff groups from schools and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), a governing team from a religious congregation, and individuals who came together only in the sessions. All have seen the sessions as opportunities to destress, to play some music, and to nourish and nurture themselves. The need for the latter takes some courage to verbalize in the current political climate, which often generates overwhelming feelings of depression, powerlessness, and immobility.

The sessions are structured to allow for spontaneity as well as structured music making on a variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, including marimbas, xylophone, metallophone, bass drums, congas, cymbals, tambours, woodblocks, hand drums, and bells. My role as music therapist is to provide a facilitating environment within which group members feel increasingly free to express themselves through spontaneous musical play. The sessions provide a space within which the group might chant a member’s favorite poem, set it to a percussion improvisation, or simply create improvi-

sations around the prevailing mood of the day or around an important event in someone's life.

One particular session with a group of teachers from a progressive Roman Catholic school in Johannesburg was a breakthrough, both for the group and for myself. It generated a synthesis of our private psychological experience and our public political one, and of our individual and collective consciousnesses.

The teachers' school, like most South African schools run by the church, has a long tradition of defying apartheid's segregated schooling policies, and it now provides schooling for a significant number of children whose lives are traumatized by ongoing violence in the townships. The teachers, some lay and some religious, are dedicated and sensitive to their pupils' needs and personal burdens. They are constantly torn between their teaching roles and the quasi-counseling roles that their particular context demands of them. In addition, a few weeks prior to the beginning of this group's creative improvisation sessions, the school had suffered its second armed robbery in a year, which had left staff members traumatized and vulnerable.

In the last session of their series with me—also the last session of the year—we began by reflecting on significant personal events of that year, with a view to creating an improvisation portraying our collective year in the mid-nineteenth-century tradition of programmatic music. After sharing our personal events, we arranged them in a sequence that we thought would maximize contrasts of mood and texture.

Our improvisation began with one teacher's wedding: the music we created was raucous, upbeat, and energetic. We sang, whooped, and danced, evoking the joy and celebration of the wedding feast. Next we portrayed another teacher's ongoing anxiety and depression about his difficult personal decisions. Earlier, he had described his family's desperate appeals to leave South Africa and head toward a more peaceful continent, as well as his own feelings of utter commitment to South Africa, however painful its processes. For most of the year he had endured the unbearable tension between these two seemingly irreconcilable dimensions of his life. The music that the group played to represent his dilemma was tense and dissonant; opposing forces tugged against one another, with no respite from the tension. We then moved on to interpreting one teacher's experience of a school outing to the magnificent Drakensberg mountain range. This teacher had spoken of being deeply moved by the responses of her severely deprived students to the spectacular, awesome mountains. Here, our music portrayed the grandeur and sacredness of the mountains, the humility and largeness of spirit that all experience in their presence,

By creating interpretive music together, we granted ourselves permission to fully realize and express our pain, despair, uncertainty, gratitude, exhaustion, and sense of celebration—both individual and shared, both private and public

and the uncontainable excitement of the children, whose gazes are all too often flattened by narrow, ugly shantytown horizons.

Our improvisation then entered its longest, darkest phase. Several teachers had cited as their outstanding memory of the year the St. James's Church massacre in Cape Town. Members of a congregation at worship had been killed when gunmen burst into their church service one Sunday evening. Our musical improvisation about this event was rent by group members' cries of despair, shouts of indignation, and wails of anguish. Cymbal crashes punctuated a somber, funereal beat on the bass drum, while rapid beating on a woodblock mimicked gunfire. The intensity and pain of the entire country seemed to enter the music that the group made, over and over again. In my role as group facilitator, I contained and allowed the depth, intensity, and passion of expression through dark harmonic textures that I improvised at the piano.

Gradually, we shifted to a mood of quieter, more resigned pain, then grieving, and then silence. Very gently, the group began to interpret the last event in the sequence: Peace Day, for which every child in the school had written a message of peace and tied it to a blue balloon. All the students and teachers walked to the top of the nearest hill and, after praying for

peace, released their balloons into the Johannesburg sky, carrying their precarious hopes. After the improvisation ended, we sat silently, some of us in tears, acknowledging our lives and the context in which we live.

PROMISE OF TRANSFORMATION

Such profoundly moving experiences as that session of music improvisation enable us to experience the wholeness of the moon, the wholeness of our humanity, and the potential wholeness of this country. By creating interpretive music together, we granted ourselves permission to fully realize and express our pain, despair, uncertainty, gratitude, exhaustion, and sense of celebration—both individual and shared, both private and public. Because each of the events was portrayed by the entire group, it ceased to be an isolating, overwhelmingly lonely burden. Acknowledged, carried, and shaped by all, the individual experience grew in stature, color, and depth, so that even the darkest phase of the session could be entered collectively without fear or shame—and could then be laid to rest.

Through this work, I have come to understand that until we who live in South Africa at this time allow ourselves to value and respect our inner life—to heed and respond to its demands for nurturing, wailing, containment, and nourishment—our fragmented external reality will remain a reflection of our fragmented and starving inner world. Like the mantis, we will continue to wait passively and be exhausted, rather than engage actively in creating our own wholeness. For it is only the wholeness within us that can become a counterpoint to the nation's tired destructiveness. As long as we remain paralyzed, at the breaking point, South Africa cannot really make progress toward a more gentle future.



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Stress Reduced Through “Challenge Response”

We humans are equipped for hard-charging, break-neck sprints through situations that briefly threaten our well-being, and also for prolonged periods of quiet and intense vigilance in circumstances of impending danger.

We are equipped for the first of these response patterns because in moments of stress, the adrenal medulla pumps out epinephrine and norepinephrine. These hormones energize the body so that we can immediately fight with or flee from the stressor that threatens us.

The second pattern of response is possible because the adrenal cortex sends into the bloodstream a different hormone, called cortisol. This substance has a sustained effect and enhances our physical stamina when impending danger must be faced for a long time. Unfortunately, it tends to make us anxious and tense while the time is passing.

An understanding of these two types of reaction to stress helps to explain why some people find stress invigorating—it alerts and concentrates the mind and enlivens the body—whereas others find their thoughts confused and their body malfunctioning. The former group, those that rise to the occasion, have what is

termed the “challenge response.” The latter react with what is popularly known as the “choking response”—they tend toward failure when they perform under stress. Researchers find that one's attitude is the ultimate determiner of whether “challenge” or “choke” predominates.

Interestingly, scientists in Norway found that among paratroopers in training, those whose jumping performance was best had high levels of stress hormones, but only of the epinephrine (not the cortisol) type. In other words, they had a “challenge” response to the jump. Those who jumped poorly were found to have high levels of cortisol in their blood. This reflected a “choking” response—one that accompanies an elevated level of body tension and anxiety.

Psychologists believe that short-term episodes of stress can gradually strengthen a person's ability to cope with long-term stress by boosting the chemical reaction occurring in the “challenge” response. These bouts of stress must be brief and not too intense in order to produce a desirable “toughening effect.” They must be counterbalanced by recovery periods in between. Doctors advise: “Work hard—but play hard too.”

Moving a Motherhouse

Virginia Ann Gardner, S.S.J.

I watched a woman survey an orderly display of china at our gigantic garage sale, an epilogue to the high drama of leaving the old motherhouse. A few weeks before, we had closed the doors of Villa Maria, beloved home to our sisters for 102 years, and moved to our new suburban living center.

"This must be a sad day for you," the woman said.

"No, not really," I answered sincerely. When her eyebrows arched in question, I explained. We had been letting go, in prayer and ritual, for three years. Besides, we had already moved the motherhouse items most dear to us into our new living center. But why uproot? Why build a new living center now?

In an age when we hear much about homelessness, it may seem strange that a congregation of religious would choose to build a new community center for themselves. In an age when fewer women are opting for religious vocations, such an investment may seem foolhardy. Who will live there, and for how long? In a time when the median age of our sisters inches closer to 65 and the number working to support the community financially grows smaller each year, it may even seem fiscally irresponsible.

INADEQUATE FACILITIES SPUR MOVE

Four years ago we Sisters of Saint Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania faced a problem shared by

many congregations: how to care properly for an increasing number of aged and infirm sisters.

Our infirmary section in the now-vacated midcity motherhouse had grown with the community. Once a single bedroom on the third floor had been reserved for the occasional sister who took sick. Eventually, two rooms were used for that purpose. In time, third-floor dormitories were converted into single and double rooms. The infirmary section of the building was considered beautiful and, back then, ample for those needing special health care.

But like most other people today, sisters live longer. Many come to need residential, then personal, and then total skilled care. In our last years at the old motherhouse, dying sisters had been confined to makeshift rooms just large enough for a bed. Worse, our small health care facility was on the third floor, where it had begun. Only one elevator accommodated stretchers coming and going from hospitals. Superiors lost sleep worrying about what would happen if there were ever a fire.

A 1989 chapter enactment, approved by the entire community, called for a study to address the need for an expanded infirmary. Later, with facts and figures before them, the sisters were convinced that it would be more economical to build a new facility than to renovate the existing one. Even if renovation were to be done in strict adherence to health and safety codes,

the community would still be left with an old building. Financial concern over needed repairs would become a constant. These considerations precipitated our decision to sell the property, which professionals had for years wanted to buy. We could see our way, then, to building anew.

BUILDING AND TRANSITION TEAMS FORMED

As the community launched into the activity that comes with a building program, two special groups of sisters kept everyone informed. First, the Community Living Center group dealt with the choices of land, architect, and contractor—brick-and-mortar decisions that were the foundation of the process. Aware that communication was vital, the community's administration informed the congregation every step of the way. The sisters rejoiced over advances and stormed heaven about setbacks, inevitable in any building program.

The second group, the Transition Team, dealt with our flesh-and-blood attachments to the place our community had called home for more than a century. That team extended itself to groups close to the sisters who would also be affected by the move and eased our way through the trauma of three phases: pre-move, move, and post-move.

The administration selected members of the Transition Team from a cross section of the community—sisters of all ages, ministries, and levels of formation—as well as from among associates of the community. Cochairs established early a climate that encouraged team members to be open to all suggestions. In time, the team formed committees and called on the congregation to volunteer to help. The response was immediate and positive; almost the entire congregation became involved.

Early in the pre-move stage, a team subgroup worked with the Worship and Prayer Committee of the congregation. Together, they asked sisters to explore their anxieties: What are you concerned about? Answers to that question became the substance of prayer in small and large groups until anxiety moved to acceptance.

Liturgists chose a journey theme for celebrations during the church year—perfect for a congregation whose charism calls for *movement*, always toward “the more.” A progressive liturgy marked the observance of the last patronal feast, on March 19. Sisters moved through the house, stopping to recall experiences they'd had in various areas, and then taking their joys and sorrows to the Eucharistic Liturgy that followed. This helped them share the trauma of letting go within a spiritual framework.

COPING WITH PRE-VATICAN II TENSIONS

In addition, this subgroup of the Transition Team called on a professor of liturgical architecture and environment to share the counsels of Vatican II and the *Constitution on the Liturgy*. This proved to be a sensitive area for those who had spent most of their lives relating to their God in a much-loved pre-Vatican II chapel. As convents are full of ordinary human beings, acceptance of the new never became universal; nonetheless, the feelings of all members of the community continue to be respected.

Another committee of the Transition Team, called Companions on the Journey, linked everyone who lived at the motherhouse with a sister or associate companion who lived elsewhere. Companions not only prayed together but also simply spent time together. Bonding in such a relationship gave courage to sisters reluctant to leave their homes, and fostered understanding and empathy in sisters not sharing those sentiments to the same degree.

One sister marked off a floor surface in the old motherhouse with masking tape to define the exact size of the bedrooms in the new building, thus making concrete the warning that there would be no extra space. Another produced scale drawings to help companions determine furniture placement prior to the move.

Together, companions visited the construction site and watched the new home grow. In time, they worked on disposing of things no longer needed, packing, and making the transfer. The friendships nurtured during the transition have continued to thrive since completion of the move.

POIGNANT FAREWELLS

The team's Celebration Committee planned days when individuals and groups close to the community could say their goodbyes to the motherhouse. First among these were former sisters who returned, many with their husbands and friends. The visit began with shared prayer in the chapel they had all loved, followed by a tour of the old home, and ended with an old-fashioned outdoor ice-cream social, complete with clowns and organ grinder.

The motherhouse had once housed students from first grade through college, so alumni also had their day of farewell. During reflections at the opening liturgy, individual graduates shared precious memories in a prayerful setting. Fortuitously, the tour coincided with a display of memorabilia from the elementary school, celebrating its centennial and still housed at the motherhouse.

The team hosted a formal sit-down dinner for employees and their spouses. Sisters and associates prepared and served the meal and provided musical interludes. So all the employees could relax and enjoy themselves, sisters and associates also covered all needs in the house that night.

CORNERSTONE ITEMS SELECTED

The cornerstone opening at the old motherhouse and the laying of the cornerstone at our new home were times of prayer and genuine celebration. The “discovery” of the contents of the old building’s cornerstone led the sisters to choose, as a group, significant items for the 1993 stone.

And there were picnics. Labor Day found sisters and associates picnicking under the bare rafters of the new home. The rain came down in torrents, but nobody cared. The next picnic, scheduled after the home’s completion, was a total joy and a “thank you” to all who had worked hard on projects during the year.

Part of that work—perhaps the most joyful part—had been done by the sisters and associates who prepared the new home for its opening. For the sisters it was a return to novitiate times, when scrubbing was the order of the day. The freedom to talk, sing, and even whistle while they worked helped to bond sisters of all ages in unity.

OPEN HOUSE DAYS JOYFUL

The first open house, scheduled even before the halls were clean and ladders were no longer needed, was for the media. Next, following a jubilant dedication liturgy with the diocesan bishop presiding, the sisters had an open house for their friends and family. People came by the hundreds. Once again, joy reigned. Then an open house was held for other religious and for special friends. The last open house was for the general public. Thus, the community had an opportunity to share its elation with everyone.

Although it may seem strange, the committee in charge of the move also knew complete contentment, if not joy. Administration offices moved first, then active sisters who could do a lot of their own moving, and finally the sisters who needed special care. Professional movers took the heavy items and placed them in the appropriate rooms according to the scale drawing posted at each door.

The assistant superior chaired the operation and was at the old motherhouse to see each group off. Sister Mary Fromknecht, superior, was at the door of the new home to greet the sisters as they arrived. Companions were omnipresent, helping with the move and giving the rooms final touches.

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HUMOR FACILITATES MOVE

An anecdote that history will preserve tells of a mover approaching a group of four sisters in wheelchairs with the question, “Who needs help first?”

“Take the prettiest,” one sister suggested—a solution immediately followed by another sister’s wry observation: “Then be sure you’re ready to handle the three you didn’t choose.”

Most poignant of all, sisters needing total care left hospital beds at the old home to be transported by ambulance to hospital beds in the fully equipped skilled-care section of the new home. People, some even strangers, seemed to come out of the woodwork to help. God gave the process spring days full of sunshine, a decided psychological boon. “There are a few things I’d do differently next time,” the chairperson admits, “but somehow I don’t think there’ll be a next time.”

COMMUNICATION AND CELEBRATION KEY

Throughout the transition, the Communication Committee used community publications to keep everyone informed. A transition logo alerted readers to each update of information, both in the biweekly internal publication for sisters and associates and in the quarterly for our external publics. The committee prepared special materials that were given to all who came to the open houses. The diocesan paper volunteered to publish a special tabloid section the week-end of the dedication and provided extra copies for open-house distribution.

Now we're enjoying the post-move phase of all this. Since the thank-you picnic, a patio party—intended to be an opportunity to plant flowers around the many patios—quickly changed into a planter party when counsel was given not to tread on the new grass. The flowers gave color to the sisters' jaunts around the living center all summer long.

Meanwhile, at the century-old Villa Maria, preparation for the gigantic garage sale took weeks and was done in true sister fashion. Once again, volunteers desired to become part of the action. The woman who thought it would be sad for the sisters to leave told me she had received the same response I gave her—"Not really"—from everyone she approached. "And order!" she exclaimed. "I am a garage-sale addict, and I've never seen the order that is in this one."

When November's bleak, rainy days descended, sisters were letting some of that cold grayness creep into their psyches. A few had ridden by the old Villa Maria, still empty, still awaiting resolution about its future—and, like Lot's wife, they were almost ready to look back.

By coincidence, an Erie meeting of all the governing boards of the Federation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph brought ninety-two visiting sisters to tour the new living center and exclaim about its beauty. Arthritic backs straightened, long faces disappeared, smiles widened—and another hurdle was overcome.

Now the Transition Team is thinking of other ways to break in the new home, desiring that everyone own it totally. As this article was being written, plans were under way for a pre-Thanksgiving get-together, beginning with a paraliturgical rite in the chapel to thank God for our safe transition. All would then move to the gathering room for a songfest and the lighting of the first fire in the new fireplace—and then on to a turkey dinner with all the trimmings. Just before Christmas everyone would return to dec-

orate our home for the Nativity season. One thing was certain: there would be no time for any delayed postpartum trauma.

REGAINING LOST UNITY

Before the move, on the third floor of the old building, sisters needing health care had their own chapel and their own dining area. Whenever the congregation met as a group, many of those sisters couldn't make it to the central chapel and meeting rooms. The public-address system brought the proceedings into their rooms. For years the community longed to bring that group once more into unity with everyone else, so we could all pray and break bread together. It took our move to the new residence to achieve the rebonding of us all.

Today, in our single-floor living center, transporting those sisters to the nearby chapel and dining room is easily accomplished. There is nothing quite like the feeling of oneness that results. As members of a congregation that claims unity as its charism, we suffered too long from a separation we could not remedy. Today, like the family that it is, our community rejoices, in moments of joy and sorrow, that we are all together again with the God who called us to be one.



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BOOK REVIEWS

Pastoral Counseling with Adolescents and Young Adults, by Charles M. Shelton, S.J., Ph.D. New York, New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1995. 238 pp. (paperback). \$19.95.

This book—the third in a major trilogy that includes *Adolescent Spirituality* and *Morality and the Adolescent*—is authored by Charles M. Shelton, a Jesuit psychologist who is associate professor of psychology at Regis University in Denver, Colorado. It is a comprehensive and practical guide that combines mental health, counseling, and developmental theory with pastoral theology. It offers insights into the emotional functioning of adolescents and young adults; addresses concrete concerns that educators, youth ministers, and pastoral counselors encounter; and offers many specific suggestions. Shelton's orientation integrates elements of cognitive psychology with psychodynamic approaches. He explains that the cognitive-dynamic orientation blends the emphases on thinking patterns (self-statements) and significant affective bonding (relationships).

In the introductory chapter, the author addresses the “psychologizing” of pastoral counseling and offers a definition of pastoral counseling for adolescents and young adults: “an encounter wherein the adult and adolescent/young adult collaborate to reflect upon personal experiences, issues, and attitudes in the young person's life.” Shelton adds that “the fruits of this dialogue in turn lead the young person to gain deepening self-insight into his or her response to the Lord, ongoing awareness of significant values, and a growing capacity to make healthy moral choices.” In his view, pastoral counseling with youth includes three essential elements: helping young people develop growing self-insight, deepening value awareness, and maturing moral decisions.

Shelton contends that the role of the pastoral youth counselor is not to provide counseling as counseling. Rather, it is to encourage the young person to cultivate behaviors, thoughts, and attitudes that reflect a grace-filled, authentic response to the gospel. He suggests that the pastoral counselor is an “inviter”—an adult who invites the adolescent to share feelings and thoughts on personal issues.

For the benefit of the pastoral counselor, the author includes helpful suggestions on the avoidance of burnout and the maintenance of confidentiality, as well as recommendations for self-care. An Ethical Code for Adults is prescribed.

Culture is identified as a vital factor affecting attitudes and behavior. Differences among the major ethnic minority groups are brought into focus. Separate chapters address characteristics of the healthy family; abuse; sexuality; depression; and drug abuse.

The author identifies “a misguided popular assumption” concerning those who grow up in “dysfunctional” families—namely, that most are significantly impaired individuals who must resolve numerous issues if they are to live healthy and happy lives. According to Shelton, scientific evidence challenges that assumption. He explains that every person is to some degree dysfunctional, noting that the significant point is the degree to which one's dysfunction prevents one from becoming a happy, healthy, and whole human being (with the realization that consistently being a happy, healthy, and whole human being is a goal we all may hope to approximate but never will totally achieve).

In his conclusion, the author states: “Few experiences that adolescents and young adults undergo are more vital and necessary than a relationship with a concerned and caring adult. . . . More than anything, our relationships with youth must provide them a concrete experience of the Lord's ongoing loving invitation to respond more and more freely to his offer of discipleship.” In this reviewer's opinion, the author provides a resource that can enable persons in ministry to more effectively offer such an invitation.

Ministers to adolescents and young adults will find this work theoretically stimulating and creatively practical.

—Daniel E. Jennings, D.S.W.

Witnessing to the Fire: Spiritual Direction and the Development of Directors, by Madeline Birmingham and William J. Connolly. Kansas City, Missouri: Sheed & Ward, 1994. 236 pp. \$16.95.

The Center for Religious Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has had over twenty-five years' experience both in giving spiritual direction to people from all walks of life and in training spiritual directors. The authors have reflected on the Center's experience and produced a gracefully written volume that should be helpful to fledgling and experienced spiritual directors and to people interested in knowing what spiritual direction is all about.

For a book that describes one center's program, *Witnessing to the Fire* has surprising breadth—which I believe derives from the authors' and the Center's focus on the experience of God and on what God is doing to draw individuals into a closer relationship. Even though I had a hand in the Center's work in its early years, I learned a great deal in the reading.

After an initial chapter that describes the Center's development over the years, the authors move back and forth between the experience of directees and directors. The stress on experience is important. For example, one might expect that a chapter whose title is

"What is Religious Development?" might be theoretical, relying on stages of development—but such is not the case. The authors focus on experiences that usher in development in the relationship between a directee and God, using dialogue to illustrate what they mean. The same is true when they write of the development of the director's own faith as a basis for the ministry of spiritual direction. They describe very well what spiritual direction is like at the Center and how they go about supervising directors in training. The last two chapters describe what happens to directors in training during their year at the Center, as well as what typically happens to directees who commit themselves to the process of direction at the Center.

The book will be of interest to anyone who is interested in God as experienced. People who are thinking about seeking a spiritual director to help them develop their relationship with God will learn about this Center's approach to direction and get a sense of whether or not it is the kind of approach they would want. Those who are wondering if they are called to be spiritual directors will find this book an invaluable overview of one significant approach to that work. Experienced spiritual directors (among whom I count myself) will learn a great deal about the process of spiritual direction that focuses on the directee's experience of God; they may even be brought up short (as I was) by reminders of both their successes and their failures to maintain that focus. Finally, those who are part of training programs for spiritual directors will find that this book provides a clear and vivid description and rationale for the kind of training given at the Center for Religious development, against which they can compare their own program and from which they can learn much. I recommend this book very highly.

—William A. Barry, S.J.